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Saipan Tribune

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'Responsible gov't and fair tax system needed to lure investors'

FERDIE DE LA TORRE
Rep. Vincent S. Aldan (Ind-Saipan), extreme right, talks about the need to have a responsible government and a fair tax system to attract investors into the CNMI during the House of Representatives session last Monday.

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

To draw businesses in, there should be a good and responsible government and a fair tax system that attracts investors, according to Rep. Vincent S. Aldan (Ind-Saipan).

» Aldan says nothing makes CNMI special

In a statement he gave during a House of Representatives session on Monday, Aldan said that, instead of having all kinds of red tape,

See INVESTORS on Page 4

Man accused of burning GF's clothes in fit of rage

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Superior Court has imposed a $2,500 cash bail on a man who

See MAN on Page 4

KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
Juan Taitano is escorted to Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph Camacho's court room by Department of Corrections officers for a bail hearing last Monday.

Flores

House OKs 10% ad valorem tax on those buying off-island cars

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The House of Representatives passed Monday a bill that would impose a 10% ad valorem tax on private individuals purchasing vehicles from dealerships or private parties outside the CNMI.

The proposed ad valorem tax, however, does not apply to businesses or

See HOUSE on Page 4

Parole board receives 50 applicants in FY '23

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

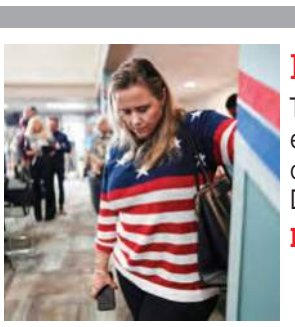
The CNMI Board of Parole's community-centric report for fiscal year 2023 states that a total of 50 inmates have sought early release and only a little over 20 were deemed eligible.

According to the board's community-centric report, which is an annual requirement submitted to the Office of the Public Auditor, a total of 50 inmates applied for parole in fiscal year 2023, but only

See PAROLE on Page 4

INSIDE

BUSINESS
Monika's Furniture is somewhat returning to its roots with the opening of Monika's Treasures in Garapan just across DFS Galleria.
PAGE 11



NATION
There was plenty in the early results of Tuesday's off-year election to make Democrats happy.
PAGE 12

ENVIRONMENT
This October was the hottest on record globally, 1.7 degrees Celsius (3.1 degrees Fahrenheit) warmer than the pre-industrial average for the month.
PAGE 14

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KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
The U.S. District Court for the NMI in Gualo Rai.

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Local

Parties in suit vs Jeju Air ask for case's dismissal

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The parties in the wrongful death lawsuit filed against Jeju Air Co. Ltd. filed a motion for dismissal yesterday pursuant to a confidential settlement agreement.

Both Mari Chung Cepeda, who represents herself and her deceased mother in the wrongful death suit against Jeju Air, and Jeju Air have reached a confidential settlement and have asked the U.S. District Court for the NMI to dismiss the case with prejudice.

Dismissal with prejudice essentially means the case cannot be filed again.

"Come now the parties, by and through counsel, hereby stipulate to dismiss this matter with prejudice…and based on a confidential settlement agreement, including all claims and defenses that have been brought or could have been brought, with each party to bear her/its own attorney fees and costs," states the stipulation.

The court has yet to rule on the motion.

According to court documents, Cepeda blames Jeju Airlines for the death of her mother, Tae Hyang Bang, after the airline refused to let her board a flight for Korea so she could obtain medical treatment for her worsening heart condition.

In her complaint, Cepeda said that Bang's heart condition took a turn for the worst in December 2020 so she decided to bring her to Korea as soon as possible to consult with a cardiologist and undergo whatever procedures were necessary to correct her condition.

Normally, Jeju Air had daily flights to South Korea but, as a result of the COVID-19 crisis, flights were discontinued. However, Jeju did offer a flight from Saipan to Korea on Jan. 15, 2021. Cepeda wanted Bang on that flight.

On Dec. 9, 2020, Cepeda attempted to book a seat on that flight but was unsuccessful. That same day, she contacted Jeju Saipan staff member Ana Kim and told her that her mother was in critical condition, with a heart problem that could not be treated on Saipan and that she was desperate to get her mother to Korea as soon as possible, and she would need to have oxygen on the plane. The complaint stated that Kim told Cepeda she would do her best to help her, but had to check with Jeju Air's upper management.

On Dec. 12, 2020, Cepeda informed Kim that she had ordered what's called a POC, the Inogen One, which was approved and authorized by the Federal Aviation Administration, for her mother's use. Kim later told Cepeda that Jeju Air management refused to allow Bang on the plane with the Inogen One.

Later that day, Cepeda received a message from Kim who said that Jeju's decision was final and that her mother would not be allowed on their plane to Korea on Jan. 15, 2021.

On Dec. 30, 2020, Cepeda filed a complaint against Jeju Air with the U.S. Department of Transportation and received a reply, stating, "We will remind the carrier that, as they are operating into a U.S. airport [and] since the rule also applies to territories, that they need to abide by the [Air Carrier Access Act] which requires them to accept FAA-approved POCs. We will forward your complaint to the airline and will ask the company to respond directly to you. Airlines are required to provide a substantive response to the complainant within 60 days." As of May 10, 2021, Jeju Air had not responded to Cepeda's complaint.

Through Bang's relatives in Korea, Cepeda was able to arrange an appointment for Bang to have a consultation at Asan Medical Center on Jan. 28, 2021.

Cepeda then again informed Jeju Air of the desperate condition her mother was in and how critical it was for her mother to get passage on the plane from Saipan to Korea, and that the POC she would use was approved by the FAA.

The lawsuit alleged that Jeju Air callously cut her off and recklessly refused to accept her explanations and failed to conduct any investigation of its obligations under the ACAA and the FAA approval

See PARTIES on Page 4

Apatang resubmits Johnson's nomination to NMTI board

» Babauta sets confirmation hearing for Johnson, DeLeon Guerrero, Attao on Tuesday

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang has resubmitted the nomination of businessman Roland Johnson as a member of the Northern Marianas Technical Institute's board of trustees.

If confirmed by the Senate, Johnson will represent Saipan/businesses and serve the remaining four years of a previously vacant four-year term that's expiring on March 11, 2027.

Apatang, as then-acting governor last week, informed Senate President Edith E. DeLeon Guerrero (D-Saipan) that he and Gov. Arnold I. Palacios are confident that Johnson's leadership will execute the mandates of the board in the administration of NMTI.

Apatang said they look forward to working collaboratively with the NMTI board to accomplish the administration's goals and objectives in developing the Commonwealth's career, trades, and technical training programs.

Apatang initially withdrew Johnson's nomination last Nov. 1 since the Senate did not have ample time to act on his nomination. He, however, stated that he will resubmit the nomination at a later time.

Apatang

The Senate Executive Appointments and Government Investigations Committee, which is chaired by Sen. Celina R. Babauta (D-Saipan), set yesterday the confirmation hearing for Johnson this Tuesday, Nov. 14, at 2pm.

Babauta also set the confirmation hearing for Marvin Deleon Guerrero and Catherine Marie Attao this Tuesday at 10:30am and 2pm, respectively.

DeLeon Guerrero was nominated to serve as a member of the board of directors for the Marianas Visitors Authority, representing Saipan and Northern Islands.

Attao was nominated to serve as a member of the board of trustees for NMTI, representing Saipan, Northern Islands, and women.

EARTHQUAKE BRIEFS

5.6-magnitude quake near the Marianas

At 4:15am on Nov. 8, 2023, a report of a 5.6-magnitude earthquake occurred near the Mariana Islands Region. Currently, there are no reports of injuries or damages and no tsunami warnings or advisories were issued by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center.

For more information, contact the CNMI EOC State Warning Point at 237-8000. ***(PR)***

5.0-magnitude quake near the Marianas

At 8:04pm on Nov. 4, 2023, a report of a 5.0-magnitude earthquake occurred near the Mariana Islands region. Currently, there are no reports of injuries or damages and no tsunami warnings or advisories were issued by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center.

For more information, contact the CNMI EOC State Warning Point at 237-8000. ***(PR)***

System routine maintenance for Nighthawk customers

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. has been informed by its electric meter provider, Nighthawk, that the headend system software will be undergoing routine maintenance on Saturday, Nov. 11, 2023, from 2am to 9am.

Nighthawk customers who wish to reconnect their electric services are advised to add funds to their PayGo account to restore electric services before the system goes offline for maintenance.

The system will be unavailable during this period. Nighthawk customers who are currently connected will not be affected by this interruption.

CUC appreciates the public's cooperation and understanding as we continue to provide reliable service to our customers. ***(CUC)***

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan's security department celebrated G4S operations manager Juan Maratita's birthday. Maratita, second from right, is seen here posing with the Garapan hotel's security staff at the Kilili Beach Pavilion last Nov. 2 in Susupe.

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Attorney for Administrator Manuel Mangarero

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF:	**Civil Action No. 09-0379**
MAXIMO LAIROPI OLOPAI, Decedent.	**NOTICE OF HEARING ON THE STIPULATED MOTION TO CONFIRM DEED OF FAMILY LANDS TO DECEDENT MAXIMO OLOPAI and FOR ATTORNEY'S FEES TO THE ESTATES'S FORMER ATTORNEY AND to REIMBURSE COSTS FOR MEDICAL AND FUNERAL EXPENSES FORMER TO ADMINISTRATRIX** **PROPOSED DATE: November 30, 2023** **TIME: 10:00 a.m.** **JUDGE: JOSEPH N. CAMACHO**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Administrator Manuel Mangarero, an heir of the Estate, through undersigned counsel, has filed a stipulated motion to confirm deed of family land to decedent Maximo Olopai and for Attorney's Fees to the Estates's Former Attorney and to reimburse costs for medical and funeral expenses to former Administratrix. The hearing on this motion is set for November 30, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. before Judge Joseph N. Camacho.

Dated this 2nd day of October, 2023.

/s/_____
Clerk of Court/ Deputy Clerk

18TH CNMI STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
Monday, November 13, 2023, at 1:00 p.m.
BOE Conference Room, Building 1241
Capitol Hill, Saipan

AGENDA[1]

I. **Swearing-In of Student Representative**

II. **Preliminary**
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda

III. **Public Comments**[2]

IV. **Old Business**

V. **New Business**
1. FY22 Audit & Closing Meeting with BOE
2. Commissioner of Education Interview Deliberation

VI. **Legal Counsel's Report**

VII. **Executive Session**[3]
1. Personnel
2. Other matters

VIII. **Miscellaneous**

IX. **Discussion of Agenda for next Board Meeting**

X. **Adjournment**

[1] **Join Zoom Meeting**
https://zoom.us/j/96813927806?pwd=aWU0anJvN3pLSDl0d1hEK3FUK2FxQT09
Meeting ID: 968 1392 7806
Passcode: 303389

[2] Pursuant to BOE Policy 0415, public comments are limited to 30 minutes. We ask that remarks be limited to 3 minutes each. Everyone is welcome to submit written comments.

[3] Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9912, the Board may vote to meet in executive session at any time.

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
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AMENDED JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT # 01-2024

Opening date: October 30, 2023 **Closing date: November 17, 2023**

Location:	**SAIPAN**	**SALARY**
Position(s):	(1) AOA Controller-I	PL 5/1 to 5/12 ($8.83/hr to $15.10/hr)
	(1) ARFF Mechanic II	PL 6/1 to 6/12 ($9.27/hr to $15.85/hr)
	(1) General Maintenance-I	PL 3/1 to 3/12 ($8.01/hr to $13.70/hr)
	(1) Master Electrician	PL 19/1 to 19/12 ($17.48/hr to $29.90/hr)
Location:	**PORT OF SAIPAN**	
Position(s):	(1) Secretary II	PL 9/1 to 9/12 ($10.73/hr to $18.35/hr)
Location:	**TINIAN**	**SALARY**
Position(s):	(1) Custodial	PL 1/1 to 1/12 ($7.26/hr to $12.42/hr)
	(1) General Maintenance	PL 2/1 to 2/12 ($7.63/hr to $13.04/hr)
	(4) Ports Police/ARFF Trainee	PL 5/1 ($8.83/hr)
Location:	**ROTA**	**SALARY**
Position(s):	(2) Custodial/Maintenance-I	PL 2/1 to 2/12 ($7.63/hr to $13.04/hr)

Employment Application must be accompanied with a copy of all required diploma/certificates and/or official sealed transcripts, original copy of recent police record not more than six (6) months old, original copy of U.S. Department of Defense Form DD214 for retired members or veterans of our Armed Forces, and other documents as required for the position. Public Law 11-70 requires that all male applicants age 18 to 25 years old must submit documentation evidencing his registration with the Federal Selective Service System. All applications and required documents must be submitted to the ***CPA Administration Office, 2nd Floor Arrival Building, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport or CPA Administration Office, Tinian International Airport, or Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport.*** Failure to provide any of the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. Certain vacancies may require written and/or physical test. Selected applicants will be subjected to pre-employment drug screening, 10-year Criminal History Record Check and 49 CFR Part 1542.209(d) Requirements. CPA reserves the right to waive or implement other qualifications to meet its needs. The deadline for submission of applications and required documents to the CPA Administration Office (Saipan) or at the Tinian International Airport or Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport is no later than 5:00 P.M. on Friday, **November 17, 2023.**

Detailed information on qualifications and position descriptions for the above positions may be picked up along with the application form from Monday-Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., except on holidays, at the CPA Administration Office (2nd Floor) of the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Arrival Terminal or CPA Admin, Office at the Tinian International Airport or at the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport. For additional information, please contact the CPA Human Resources Office by email at lorna.robert@cnmiports.com and hrspecialist@cnmiports.com or by phone at (670)237-6500.

CPA is an Equal Opportunity Employer and CPA hires those who are legally entitled to employment in the CNMI.

WENDI PRATER
Acting Executive Director

AT ASIAN AND PACIFIC ENERGY FORUM

Delegates agree on measures to shape energy transition, address climate crisis

Asian and Pacific countries agreed recently on measures to shape the future of energy use and generation, and to address climate change in a region that consumes more than 40 percent of the world's power and generates more than half of global greenhouse gas emissions.

These critical issues were the focus of the third Asian and Pacific Energy Forum (APEF), which closed last month at the United Nations Conference Centre in Bangkok. This event brought together more than 265 participants from 42 countries, including ministers, senior officials, experts and representatives of international organizations.

UN

The third Asian and Pacific Energy Forum (APEF) was held at the United Nations Conference Centre in Bangkok from Oct. 16 to 20, 2023.

"Recent crises have tested us all, resulting in economic shocks, energy supply price rises and supply chain disruptions, all of which have threatened progress on the energy transition and, more broadly, sustainable development," said Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in her opening remarks.

She added, "These events remind us of the need for energy resilience and security to be considered alongside sustainability. For the energy sector, pursuing better energy efficiency, universal access to modern energy and increasing the share of renewable energy are strategies that can improve our collective ability to weather these shocks and recover better."

Asia and the Pacific undergoing rapid development is standing at a pivotal moment in the global energy transition. It plays a critical role in securing policies, strategies and initiatives that address energy resilience and security, and progress on Sustainable Development Goal 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy). Across the region, there is a crucial need to close the final gaps in universal electricity access, clean cooking, energy efficiency and renewable energy adoption. Countries also have agreed on a Regional Road Map on Power System Connectivity for creating secure, sustainable and affordable power systems. The Road Map also underscores the importance of multilateral power trading to unlock the flexibility needed to enable the integration of high shares of renewable energy.

"At the heart of this challenge is affordability. Energy must be more accessible and affordable to marginalized and underserved communities," underscored H.E. Pirapan Salirathavibhaga, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Energy of Thailand.

The Forum culminated in the adoption of a ministerial declaration on "Building a Secure, Sustainable and Interconnected Energy Future for Asia and the Pacific" that will guide the partnership between ESCAP and its member States in addressing these pressing energy challenges towards a sustainable energy future in the region. ***(UN)***

INVESTORS

From page 1

the CNMI government should have a system in place that requires only a small process of paperwork in order to do business here.

"I'm saying a lot of things that are not popular, but I guarantee you it is the truth," he said.

At the start of the session, Rep. Thomas John DLC. Manglona (R-Saipan) introduced a bill that will establish a permanent One-Stop Business License and Permitting Center operated by the Department of Commerce.

During the miscellaneous portion of the session, Rep. Denita K. Yangetmai (D-Saipan) said many people are complaining about raising taxes and that she is sure there are other ways for the CNMI to make money. She suggested inviting investors to come in, such as shoe and garment factories.

Aldan said the CNMI wants to invite all kinds of investors, but it is competing against the whole world and not just with other islands.

"We're competing against other countries with their tourism and everything. What makes us so special? Reality, nothing. Nothing makes us special," the lawmaker pointed out.

Aldan said nobody wants to pay taxes any more than they do right now, yet people still want the best, top-of-the-line medical health care clinic in the world.

He said everybody wants the CNMI to be the No. 1 tourist destination, yet nobody wants to pay the taxes that go with it.

"You want the best, you pay. You want a good government, get involved. Let's top this under-the-mango-tree-picnic-table legislation and administration," Aldan said.

He said if people expect more than what the government can give, then they must expect to pay.

Aldan said the money that legislators appropriate is the people's money. "And we're only going to pay what we can afford," he said.

Aldan said he is all about investors coming. However, it's a lot easier to clean "the house" first than it is to attract new businesses to come in, he said.

If people have issues with government agencies, then they should get involved by writing a report and getting the word out, he said.

"Make a complaint so it can be fixed. People cannot expect the Legislature and the administration to fix it itself. We need everybody's help," Aldan said.

MAN

From page 1

is being accused of burning his girlfriend's clothes and assaulting her in a fit of rage.

Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho imposed Monday a $2,500 cash bail on Juan Taitano, 30, who is facing charges of disturbing the peace, assault and battery, and vandalism.

Following the bail hearing, Camacho remanded Taitano back to Department of Corrections custody and ordered him to return to court on Nov. 13 for a preliminary hearing; his arraignment is set for Nov. 20.

According to court documents, Department of Public Safety officers were dispatched to Finasisu Terraces at around 10:28pm on Nov. 3, to respond to a domestic violence and disturbing the peace report.

At the scene, police met with the caller who appeared to have a bloody lip and swollen face.

When officers stepped inside the residence, they said they saw shattered glass on the floor, which she claimed was caused by Taitano.

In addition, police said the victim shared a video that Taitano had sent her of him burning her clothes and belongings at a residence in Dan Dan.

Earlier that evening, according to the alleged victim, Taitano was drunk and angry and wanted to take one of the children in the residence to his home in Dan Dan. However, the victim took the child away and told him to leave.

However, the victim said Taitano started to break things inside the apartment before grabbing her head and holding it tightly to his chest. To escape, the victim said she bit Taitano's chest.

After letting go, Taitano allegedly kicked the victim's leg and swung a fist at her, hitting her in the arm. In addition, the victim said Taitano head bumped her mouth before she managed to grab her phone and call the police. When Taitano saw she was calling the police, he left.

Later that evening, police found Taitano at his residence in Dan Dan. Police said they recognized Taitano from a photo the victim had shared so they arrested him and brought him to DOC.

PAROLE

From page 1

21 were found eligible while 29 were found ineligible.

In addition, the Parole Board recommended clemency or pardon for 12 convicts out of the 19 that applied.

The Parole Board shared in its report that one of the biggest successes it has accomplished is maintaining the needs for parolees who are still undergoing rehabilitation and counseling.

"The Board of Parole Office successfully [helped gain] employment for 84% of our parolees with the help of NMTech and private businesses. With the help of NAP Office, the parole officers had directed parolees that are in need of assistance to gain access to the benefits of the NAP program," the report said

With the help and acknowledgment of the Legislature, the Parole Board also received additional equipment for community work services and rendered assistance to public schools, including Kagman High School, William S. Reyes Elementary School, Tanapag Middle School, and Koblerville Middle School.

Lastly, in fiscal year 2023, the Parole Office welcomed three new board members; Anthony Macaranas, Christopher Leon Guerrero, and Richard Barcinas

HOUSE

From page 1

commercial entities importing vehicles for resale or commercial use within the CNMI.

Of the 19 House members present at a session, only Rep. Thomas John DLC. Manglona (R-Saipan) voted "no" to pass House Bill 23-68, House Substitute 1. Rep. Ralph N. Yumul (Ind-Saipan) attended the session, but was not in the chamber during the voting.

The bill, which was introduced by Rep. Marissa Renee Flores (Ind-Saipan) last Aug. 18, now goes to the Senate for action.

According to the House fiscal analyst's cost-benefit analysis, 22 vehicles were imported into the CNMI in fiscal year 2023. The total invoice value for all 22 vehicles was $407,259, which includes the nonbusiness use exemption reductions and generated a tax revenue of $22,248.

Should H.B. 23-68 pass and using the 2023 data, the taxable revenue would be $40,725, resulting in an increase of $18,477, or an 83.05% increase in taxable revenue.

The House Ways and Means Committee, chaired by Rep. Ralph N. Yumul (Ind-Saipan), adopted some amendments to include more paragraphs in the findings and purpose section. The committee also substituted the original amendment language with a new provision.

Businesses importing vehicles for resale are currently assessed as follows: Passenger vehicles with a value not exceeding $30,000 per unit, 5% ad valorem; and passenger vehicles having a value in excess of $30,000 per unit, 5.75% ad valorem.

The committee foresees that, with the implementation of this proposed tax, local dealerships may become a more financially appealing option for people.

The committee found that this change does not only assure that a larger portion of money stays in the CNMI, supporting economic resilience, but also promises to help local enterprises.

In recommending the passage of this bill, the committee determined that the legislation will strike a balance between immediate revenue generation and long-term economic resilience.

Flores stated in the bill that this legislation is not merely a fiscal tool as it is a testament to the Legislature's unwavering commitment to fairness, fiscal prudence, and the holistic development "of our beloved CNMI."

PARTIES

From page 2

of the Inogen one POC.

According to the lawsuit, if Bang had been able to be on that flight and get to Korea on Jan. 15, 2021, she would have completed a 14-day quarantine and made the appointment at Asan Medical Center on Jan. 28, 2021.

If not for Jeju Air's violation of the law in refusing passage to Bang using a POC, Cepeda said Bang would have arrived in Korea on Jan. 15, 2021, and would have had access to the specialized cardiac care at Asan Medical Center that would have saved her life.

SCS celebrates 36 years of Concert Band excellence

Saipan Community School kicked off its 36th year of Concert Band for students in 4th-8th grade. The SCS opening concert was held last Oct. 19 at the school's chapel. The event drew a large crowd of enthusiastic parents, teachers, and community members who were eager to witness the musical journey of SCS' young musicians.

The concert opened with a powerful rendition of "Regal March" by Bruce Pearson, arranged by Chuck Elledge, performed by the Beginning and Intermediate Bands. The combination of youthful energy and precise execution set the stage for an evening of musical brilliance.

The audience was then transported to the era of Beethoven with a stirring rendition of "Ode To Joy" from Beethoven's 9th Symphony. The young musicians displayed remarkable control and sensitivity, capturing the essence of this timeless masterpiece.

The program continued with a diverse selection of pieces, ranging from the uplifting "Psalm 150" to the nostalgic "Give My Regards to Broadway."

In order to expand SCS' musical offerings, they introduced their SCS Chorus, which captivated the audience with their harmonious voices and expressive delivery. A highlight of their numbers was the performance of "Can You Feel The Love Tonight" from Walt Disney Pictures' "The Lion King." The chorus's rendition was filled with expressive emotion, evoking the magical moments of the beloved film.

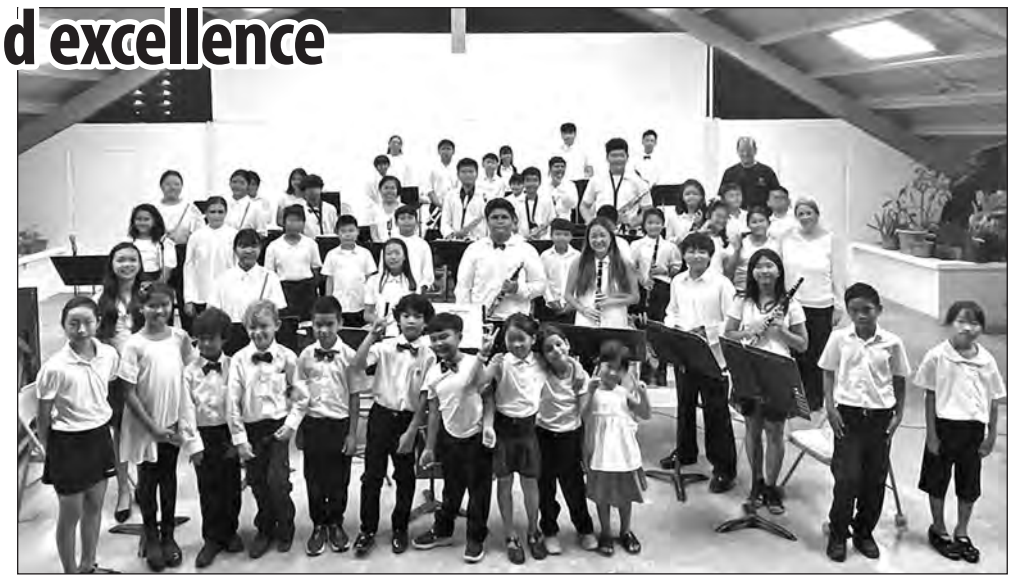
The Advanced Band took center stage with a medley from the musical "Jersey Boys," showcasing their technical prowess and dynamic range. The energy and enthusiasm of the performance were contagious, leaving the audience wanting more.

The concert concluded with a rousing rendition of Andrew Lloyd Webber's "The Music of The Night" from "The Phantom of the Opera." The band's intricate performance created a truly unforgettable finale.

Throughout the evening, the exceptional musical talent of SCS' students was on full display. Their dedication and passion for music were evident in every note they played and every word they sang.

The concert served as a testament to the importance of music education in fostering creativity, self-expression, and teamwork. Music has the power to transport us to different worlds, evoke emotions, and connect us with others. Through music education, SCS is nurturing the talents of its students and instilling in them a lifelong appreciation for the arts.

As SCS celebrates its 36th year of Concert Band, the school remains committed to providing its students with the opportunity to explore their musical potential and discover the joy of creating and sharing music. The annual concert is a testament to this commitment, and it is a cherished event that brings the community together to celebrate the power of music. SCS invites the island community to join them on Dec. 7 for their Christmas Band Concert at the SCS Chapel. ***(SCS)***



SCS

The Saipan Community School celebrated 36 years of its Concert Band with a live performance at the SCS chapel last Oct. 19.

SCS

Throughout the evening, the exceptional musical talent of SCS students was on full display at the SCS opening concert.

SCS

The SCS opening concert drew a large crowd of enthusiastic parents, teachers, and community members.

'Salaries of Tinian dept. heads adjusted to FY '23 level'

Tinian Mayor Edwin P. Aldan issued a statement yesterday to clarify what he describes as "misinformation" regarding the premium pay issued to resident department heads on Tinian, emphasizing that no bonuses were given to the RDHs.

What happened, he said, is just the restoration of these government employees' salaries to where they were in fiscal year 2023.

"In clarifying the premium pay, it is important to understand that during the [fiscal year 20]24 budget process, the House of Representatives significantly reduced the salary of all [resident department heads] on Tinian and Rota from $45,000 to $36,000. Of all the CNMI FTEs, the RDHs on Tinian and Rota were the only government employees to receive a salary reduction in the FY24 budget," he said.

Aldan

Aldan said he aggressively advocated for the restoration of salaries of the resident department heads for both Tinian and Rota when the Senate took up the budget.

"This plea extended to the conference committee, emphasizing the [resident department heads'] vital role and their parallel responsibilities to that of secretaries of respective departments.

More importantly, he said, the pay decrease would create salary inequalities since the resident department heads would, in most cases, be paid less than their deputy directors and even some of their staff.

"It is crucial to recognize that these [resident department heads] manage central government departments that significantly impact the quality of life and well-being of Tinian's residents. Their extensive duties and invaluable contributions are crucial to the delivery of essential public service," he said.

In light of these matters, Aldan said, the decision was made not to give the resident department heads a bonus but to reinstate their salaries back to the fiscal year 2023 budget level. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

GCC to host college and career night on Thursday

Guam Community College will be hosting a "Family Road Map to College and Career Night" today, Nov. 9, 2023, from 6pm to 7:30pm at the GCC Multi-Purpose Auditorium (Bldg. 300). The event aims to inform parents/guardians and their high school teens on of opportunities and services available to them through GCC's post-secondary programs.

The informational session will provide helpful information to make the transition from high school to college at GCC as seamless as possible. After the presentation, participants will have the opportunity to walk around to the different program and service booths and ask questions that can help students hit the ground running when they enter GCC as a college student.

» **Open to all parents/ guardians and high school students**

Just some questions to ask at the event:

- What job opportunities are available for the programs you are interested in?
- How long will your program take to complete?
- How much does going to school cost and is there help in paying for the courses?
- Are there any short programs I can take so I can go straight to work?
- After completing my GCC degree program, can my courses transfer to another college/university?

Whatever questions you have about GCC, our faculty, staff, and counselors can help find the answer. Let us help you create your Family Roadmap to College or Career success. ***(GCC)***

GCC Board of Trustees meeting on Nov. 14

The Guam Community College Board of Trustees will hold its monthly board meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 14, 2023, at 12pm at Guam Community College in Room 112, Learning Resource Center (GCC Library), Building 4000.

All attendees are encouraged to wear a mask on the GCC campus.

Individuals requiring special accommodations, auxiliary aids, or services should contact, (671)735-5641 Ext. 5594/5597. ***(GCC)***

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: DPW24-ITB No.: 42400006

SUBMISSION DATE: December 11, 2023 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"Route 36 (Windward/Chalan Kalarera) Improvement, Phase1A."

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, LOCATED ON SECOND FLOOR, OLEAI JOETEN COMMERCIAL CENTER, SAN JOSE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

The project package will be available on or after **November 09, 2023** at Technical Services Division, Department of Public Works, located on Second Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, San Jose, Saipan.

There will be a **Pre-bid Conference** for this project on **November 28, 2023,** 9:00 a.m. local time at the Department of Public Works Conference Room 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center Office, Saipan. The Prospective bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the site. All question regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time on **December 07, 2023** to **Mr. Anthony A. Camacho, Director of Technical Services Division,** 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547. Response to questions shall be shared with prospective bidders.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ RAY N. YUMUL
SECRETARY, DPW

/S/ BRIEN SERS NICHOLAS JR.
Acting Director, Division of Procurement Services

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: http://www.nmhcgov.net
Tels: (670) 234-9447 / 234-6866 / 234-7670 • Fax: (670) 234-9021

PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

NMHC hereby publicly discloses that on August 23, 2023, **Ellis F. Barcinas,** an immediate family member **of Janel B. Crisostomo,** an employee of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, applied for assistance under the Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Housing Program.

Said applicant has been determined to be a member of a group or class of low to moderate income individuals intended to be beneficiaries of the assisted activity and is applying to receive generally the same benefits being made available to the group or class. **Ms. Crisostomo** is not and shall not be involved in the handling of this grant application.

NMHC discloses this possible conflict pursuant to 24 CFR 92.356 in order to allow any interested persons to comment before the application is considered for an exception under the applicable conflict regulations.

Written comments may be faxed to Fox No.: (670) 234-9451, mailed to P.O Box 500514 Saipan, MP 96950, or emailed to cnmi-cdbg-dr@nmhcgov.net on or before **November 30, 2023.**

Dated this **9th** day of **November**, **2023**.

/s/
JESSE S. PALACIOS
Corporate Director

NORTHERN MARIANAS HUMANITIES COUNCIL

Board Vacancy Announcement

CNMI residents are invited to express their interest in serving as a Board member for the Northern Marianas Humanities Council (Council). The Council is a non-profit, private corporation affiliated with the National Endowment for the Humanities whose mission is to navigate and explore the human experiences of the indigenous and diverse peoples of the Commonwealth by enriching their lives through research, dialogue, programs, and publications.

The Council's Board is comprised of thirteen volunteer members who serve three-year terms. The Council strives to maintain a board that reflects a broad cross section of our CNMI community and consider the following factors: humanities expertise, fiscal and fundraising expertise, geographical coverage, demographic diversity, and attendance at a post-secondary institution. The ideal candidate will have a strong desire to promote the Council's mission, programs, and activities and to actively participate in fundraising activities. Board responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Attending regular Council meetings four times annually;
- Raising funds for Council programs;
- Recruiting community partners;
- Promoting awareness about the Council's mission and its programs in the community;
- Attending Council programs and activities;
- Participating in working committee meetings;
- Evaluating Council programs and activities;
- Reviewing grant applications;
- Providing input about the humanities from various community members, and
- Attending conferences, workshops and other meetings on behalf of the Council.

Applicants are invited to submit their letters of interest and resumes to **Dr. Bobby J.A. Cruz, Chair**, Northern Marianas Humanities Council at Post Office Box 506437 Saipan, MP 96950, delivered to the Council's office located in the Springs Plaza Building in Gualo Rai, Saipan, or via email to: info@nmhcouncil.org. For additional information, please contact the Council's Executive Director, Leo Pangelinan, at telephone 235-4785 or visit the Council's website at www.nmhcouncil.org.

US Coast Guard formally establishes Base Guam

USCG

The U.S. Coast Guard holds an establishment for U.S. Coast Guard Base Guam on Nov. 8, 2023, in a ceremony presided over by Rear Adm. Carola List, commander of Operational Logistics Command.

USCG

Led by Cmdr. Dana Hiatt, Base Guam will be pivotal toward enhancing the U.S. Coast Guard's mission support logistics in the region.

SANTA RITA, Guam—The U.S. Coast Guard is proud to announce the establishment of U.S. Coast Guard Base Guam on Nov. 8, 2023, in a ceremony presided over by Rear Adm. Carola List, commander of Operational Logistics Command.

Led by Cmdr. Dana Hiatt, Base Guam, will be pivotal toward enhancing the U.S. Coast Guard's mission support logistics in the region. This strategic move aligns with the service's commitment to increase mission support throughout Oceania. Given Guam's vital importance to national security, this initiative takes center stage.

USCG

The establishment of Base Guam is part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023.

The establishment of Base Guam is part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 and expands the U.S. Coast Guard's mission support in the Indo-Pacific region. The establishment will shift current facilities engineering, naval engineering, comptroller and base operations, health, safety, and work life, personnel support, information technology, and procurement billets and responsibility from the existing U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam to a new Base Guam command structure. The establishment of Base Guam will consist of 17 additional personnel billets and will rely on the realignment of existing elements to provide logistical efficiencies improving U.S. Coast Guard mission support on Guam.

U.S. Coast Guard Base Guam will operate under the direction of the Operational Logistics Command, responsible for mission support logistics across the entire U.S. Coast Guard enterprise while coexisting with U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam. The base is taking on the role of the lead logistics and support command, a strategic decision aimed at better serving the needs of the operational community and partners. Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam retains the role of operational authority for U.S. Coast Guard activity in the Western Pacific.

The Base crew's responsibilities encompass contingency logistics planning for joint operational plans, integration of logistics services, and support for tactical logistics needs for deployed operational assets. Additionally, the enterprise maintains a national-level logistics common operating picture and commands the Coast Guard's 22 existing bases, ensuring the execution of assigned tasking through each of the U.S. Coast Guard's Logistics and Service Centers.

The establishment of Base Guam marks a significant milestone in strengthening the U.S. Coast Guard's presence and capabilities in the region. The unit is physically located on the existing U.S. Coast Guard footprint within U.S. Naval Base Guam.

USCG

The establishment for U.S. Coast Guard Base Guam aligns with the service's commitment to increase mission support throughout Oceania.

Rear Adm. Carola List currently serves as the commander of Operational Logistics Command in Norfolk, Virginia, overseeing the delivery of mission support logistics and administering procurement policy, guidance, and advocacy while also providing operational procurement and contracting services for all supported commands and units.

U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam comprises more than 300 dedicated members based in Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Capt. Nicholas Simmons currently leads Forces Micronesia and serves as the U.S. Coast Guard Captain of the Port for Guam and the CNMI. The U.S. Coast Guard is committed to maritime safety, security, and stewardship in Oceania, operating under the U.S. Coast Guard 14th District umbrella, which oversees Central and Western Pacific operations. ***(USCG)***

USCG

Given Guam's vital importance to national security, the establishment of the U.S. Coast Guard Base Guam takes center stage.

USCG

The establishment of Base Guam expands the U.S. Coast Guard's mission support in the Indo-Pacific region.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Federal government wastes billions on empty offices

"Office Space" may be a comedy classic, but the government's version is no laughing matter.

Last month, the U.S. Government Accountability Office released a report on how federal agencies use—or don't use—their headquarters. It examined 24 agencies, including the departments of Justice, Education and Transportation.

It found that 17 of the 24 agency headquarters buildings "were at 25 percent capacity or less in the first three months of 2023." Among the bottom quartile of agencies, the usage was a mere 9 percent. Even among the agencies that used their headquarters' space the most, none topped 50 percent occupancy.

This is an issue with a large footprint. The federal government owns more than 460 million square feet of office space. Maintaining it costs taxpayers billions every year. It's wasteful to have so much unused space.

One might assume this is a new problem. Perhaps the federal government has been slow to adjust to remote work and the bureaucracy just hasn't had time to recalculate how much space is needed. Undoubtedly, that's a factor, but it's not the underlying one.

"Even before the pandemic shifted the balance between in-office and remote work, federal agencies struggled to identify and let go of unneeded space," the GAO noted. "Operating unused space has unnecessary financial and environmental costs—one reason federal property management has been on our High Risk List since 2003."

Two decades of mismanagement isn't just a problem. It's a pattern—and it's not surprising. If you're running a federal agency, accumulating office space is a sign of prestige. It reflects the importance of your agency and implies that the work you're doing is important. Just look at the size of that office building.

Largess in the private sector happens, too, but economic downturns and competitive pressures act as self-correcting mechanisms. Private-sector companies have an incentive—the profit motive—to use only what is necessary and scale back when needed.

That doesn't happen in government. Cutting back on office space may mean a smaller agency budget. And because most government bureaucracies rarely experience actual budget cuts—and can't go bankrupt thanks to a steady stream of other people's money—downsizing doesn't happen.

The GAO recommends that agencies develop new benchmarks for measuring building use. Expect those agencies to agree with that suggestion and then try to ignore it. After all, it's only taxpayer money. Congress should monitor progress and demand that federal agencies adopt a more efficient approach to office space.

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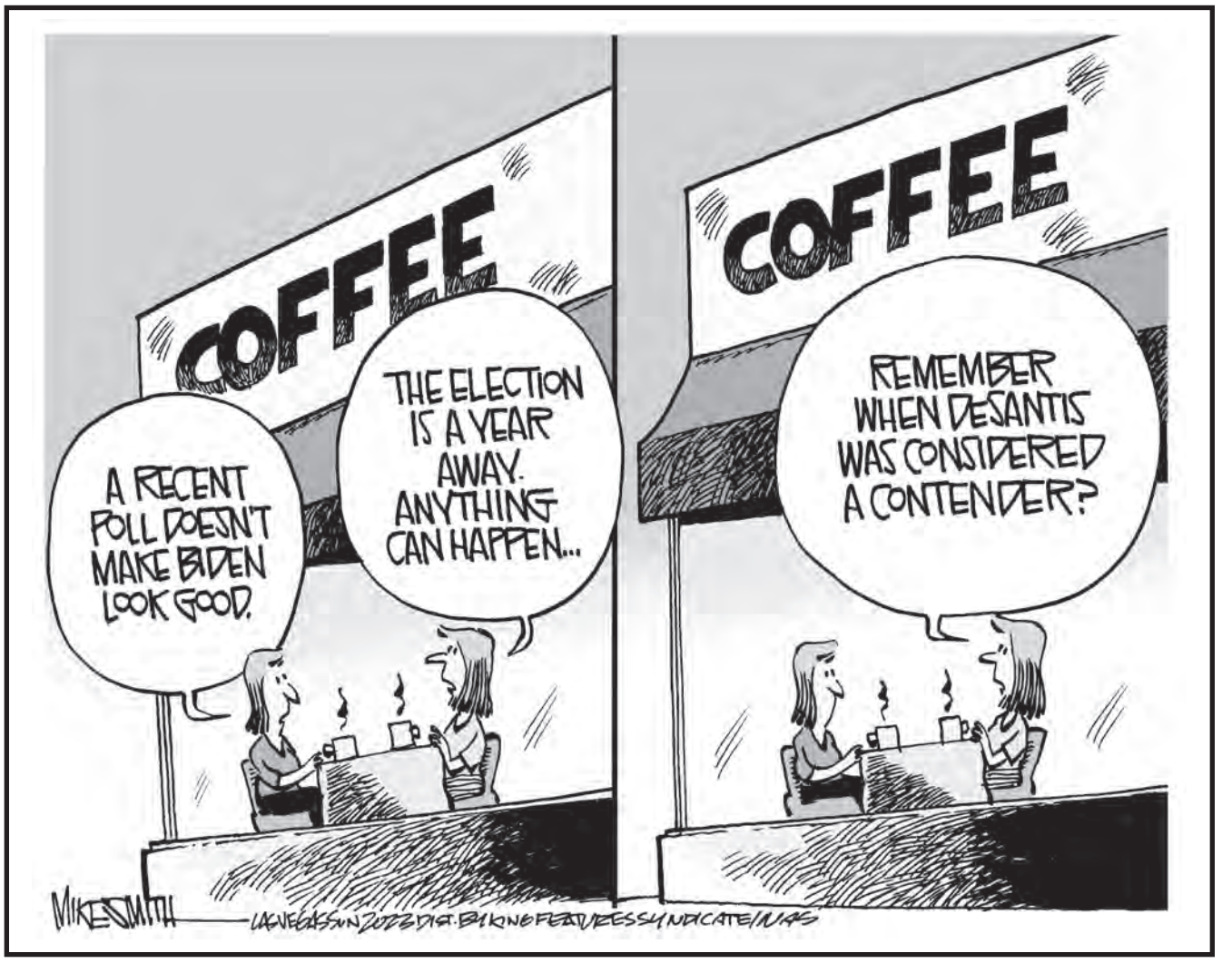

COFFEE
A RECENT POLL DOESN'T MAKE BIDEN LOOK GOOD.
THE ELECTION IS A YEAR AWAY. ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN...
COFFEE
REMEMBER WHEN DESANTIS WAS CONSIDERED A CONTENDER?
MIKE SMITH
LAS VEGAS SUN 2023 DIST. BY KING FEATURES SYNDICATE/IWAS

How jihadist groups are using the Israel-Hamas war to inspire and recruit lone wolf extremists

By COLIN P. CLARKE
Los Angeles Times

Colin P. Clarke is the director of research at the Soufan Group, an intelligence and security consulting firm in New York City.

It didn't take long after the Hamas attack in Israel on Oct. 7 for terrorist groups to flood the internet with praise for the killings. The next step for entities such as al-Qaida and Islamic State is to capitalize on raging antisemitism to fuel homegrown violent extremist attacks in the West, perpetrated by lone wolves and small cells of jihadist sympathizers. All cities and nations should be bracing for that.

Despite historical enmity between Hamas and the jihadist groups with broader ambitions, numerous al-Qaida-linked groups heaped praise upon Hamas, while also taking the opportunity to celebrate the death of Israelis.

Al-Qaida in the Indian Subcontinent, an al-Qaida offshoot, celebrated the Oct. 7 attack, saying it "exposed the cowardice of Israeli soldiers." Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula in Yemen praised Hamas' actions and spoke about the "myth" of Israeli military might, prodding its supporters in the Muslim world to harness the momentum of the attack.

Al-Qaida's Somalia branch, known as Shabab, released a statement that read: "We salute all the brave heroes, the brave commandos, and all those stationed in the Holy Land." The group expressed wishes for God to reward the terrorists "for your jihad and your noble deeds."

But these groups are doing more than just praising Hamas and denigrating Israel. According to FBI Director Christopher Wray, who appeared before the Senate on Tuesday to offer an assessment of the implications of the Israel-Hamas war, "multiple foreign terrorist organizations have called for attacks against Americans and the West," while al-Qaida "issued its most specific call to attack the United States in the last five years." The State Department issued a worldwide travel warning for Americans, noting the "potential for terrorist attacks" abroad "due to increased tensions in various locations around the world."

Various countries in Europe have already tightened security after a series of incidents linked to Islamist extremism last month, including terrorist attacks in Belgium and France, as well as incidents targeting a synagogue in Germany and the arrest of two Islamic State sympathizers who were recruiting in Italy.

The implications of an increased threat posed by jihadist groups dovetail with a huge increase in antisemitic incidents worldwide, especially in Europe. During the first two weeks of the conflict, there were 76 recorded in Austria and nearly 600 in France. Germany also had a huge spike— a 240% increase in the period after Oct. 7 compared with a year earlier. Police in London confirmed more than 218 antisemitic hate crimes between Oct. 1 and Oct. 18, more than 13 times as many as a year earlier.

The increased threat from jihadist groups is global, but given Europe's long and sordid history with antisemitism, London, Paris and Berlin warrant especially close scrutiny. Police departments and national authorities should be protecting synagogues and other Jewish sites and should maintain close contact with Jewish leaders and institutions to keep aware of threats and assess their credibility.

As the conflict continues, specific events could spur extremists to action. When Israel is accused (credibly or otherwise) of killing or injuring civilians, this could trigger violent attacks against Jewish targets anywhere in the world. As images of dead and injured civilians in Gaza continue to appear on social media, some jihadist groups are certain to try to use the posts to stir up anger and inspire extremist attacks.

Continued and persistent vigilance is essential, including the monitoring of social networks where threats are the most frequent and overt. It will be crucial for countries to allocate the proper resources to protecting soft targets—which would include mosques as well as synagogues, as far-right extremists motivated by Islamophobia could use the Hamas attack as a pretext to target Muslims.

As the conflict approaches the one-month mark, it shows no signs of abating. And chilling as it is to imagine, the worst may still lie ahead, with a grueling ground war and a mounting civilian toll. That will only fuel jihadist groups and their sympathizers.

Local and national authorities around the world should assume that attacks are being planned. Now is the time to use every counterterrorism strategy available—monitoring online chatter, building relationships in vulnerable communities, bolstering physical defenses at soft targets. None of that will stop the war in Gaza, but it can prevent casualties around the world.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

I was a NOVID—until I wasn't

By CARLA HALL
Los Angeles Times

Carla Hall is an editorial board member for the Los Angeles Times

I thought I would never get COVID. I have been vaccinated six times—so many that I ran out of space on my vaccination card. I am the person still wearing a mask at Ralphs, Trader Joe's and CVS. (I don't know what people in those stores have been up to.) I went to a movie theater only once in the past three years—and it was to celebrate a former colleague's documentary at a film festival.

Last December, as COVID surged, I shivered with friends in the outdoor seating of a restaurant. The owner came out to greet us and asked, "What are you doing sitting out here?" Not getting COVID, I thought.

One by one, my (vaccinated) friends got it. My niece, nephew and their mother all got it at different times. Fortunately, no one had a severe case or ended up hospitalized.

Only two of my close friends had never contracted COVID—even though each had lived in homes with people who did. And one of them has gotten everything else—RSV, bronchitis and assorted colds. By the fall, just the three of us remained on our island of COVID evaders. We marveled at our increasingly rare status in the biosphere. We were the vaunted "NOVIDs."

Then I got kicked off the island.

On Friday, Oct. 13—exactly three years and seven months since the Friday the 13th in March when a national emergency was declared—I walked into my high school reunion in Chicago and spent the next five hours with my cherished schoolmates from my all-girls Catholic high school. We drank and ate. We hugged and laughed and talked in each other's faces and scrunched together for a class photo.

I got off the plane back to L.A. Monday evening and tested when I got home. For the first time, I was staring in disbelief—even though I wasn't feeling well—at a bright pink line on a COVID test. I was dejected and annoyed. And I was sick—by the following day I had a fever, a cough, a river of a runny nose and fatigue. My internist told me it was remarkable I had gone this long without getting it.

So why did I last so long as a NOVID? And why did I finally succumb?

"That's a really good question," says Peter Chin-Hong, an infectious disease physician at UC San Francisco. "Several factors made it easier to transmit right now." The biggest of those is the emerging HV.1 variant of omicron, he says. "These subvariants are becoming more and more transmissible. … HV.1 was pretty absent at the end of July and then it started taking off. People think it might be the variant of the winter. One reason it took off is that it's very easy to get."

There could also be a collective drop in immunity, he says. "A lot of people got infected in California and around the country in the spring of 2023. When you add six months to that, some immunity and antibodies drop. If everyone drops at the same time, it's easier to spread."

And I didn't have the full immunity my new vaccination would give me because I got it less than two weeks before I went to the reunion.

We don't know for sure where I got infected (or if I was the person who brought it to the reunion). It could have been the airport or the airplane, although I was masked on the plane. But considering the size of the reunion and other factors, it's conceivable I walked into a perfect brew of circumstances to get COVID.

Chin-Hong knows how I feel. He got COVID for the first (and only) time last Thanksgiving from a visiting relative. "I felt like I was a failure. Here I am being the most careful person," he said.

He estimates maybe less than 10% of the population nationally has never gotten COVID.

Barbara Ferrer, the director of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, is one of them. She has never gotten COVID. "I know there are a significant number of people who haven't gotten COVID. But I'm not really convinced for all of those folks it's because we're never going to get it."

Ferrer has a family member who has had it four times. "I've been with this person and have not gotten infected. But she didn't infect anyone. There are people who get infected and don't infect that easily. It's a new virus and there's still a lot to learn about it," she said.

She takes many of the same precautions I do. She masks in places that don't appear to be well ventilated. She avoids crowded restaurants and hasn't been in any bars since before the pandemic. But she goes to outdoor concerts and baseball games. And she tests twice a week.

In my case, she said, I probably got a really intense exposure.

Of the estimated 134 women attending the reunion, seven of us got COVID, one of the reunion organizers told me. (I sat next to one of the seven at a brunch that Saturday morning.)

"Those are probably the tip of the iceberg," Chin-Hong said. Chances are more of my former classmates probably got it but didn't test or had very minor symptoms.

Seven days after I got ill, one of my friends still on the COVID island suddenly tested positive. "I doubt you gave it to me over the phone," she texted.

One nice thing: Between my latest vaccination and my bout of COVID I could have immunity that lasts through the winter, Chin-Hong says.

He does believe there may be a small group of people with some natural immunity. "You were a NOVID," he tells me. "Maybe at the end of this winter, the real NOVIDS will be left standing."

Science could finally discover aliens. What does that mean?

By ADAM FRANK
Los Angeles Times

Adam Frank is a professor of astrophysics at the University of Rochester. His book, The Little Book of Aliens, *was published this month.*

Are we alone? Is life around us a cosmic accident that only happened once on this lonely planet, making human beings the only technological civilization anywhere? Or is the universe teeming with life, and perhaps even intelligence and self-awareness?

These questions have haunted humanity for millennia. Science is now poised to take a fantastic leap forward in answering them.

Over the next few decades, we will finally gain hard data that will help us answer our questions about alien life. But as we come ever closer to that milestone, another equally pressing question emerges. What would finding alien life—or not—mean for us all?

Many people believe that answers about life in the universe will come from Earth's own skies via UFOs—or as our government has taken to calling them, Unidentified Aerial Phenomena. Recent years have seen the Pentagon acknowledging pilots' reports of UAP and creating a related office, Congress holding UAP hearings and NASA launching its own study of the phenomena.

This openness is good, and a true scientific inquiry will be useful for everybody. Scientists, however, have quite brutal requirements for linking evidence to a claim as extraordinary as saying life exists beyond Earth. The kind of evidence science needs to link UAP to anything non-human simply does not yet exist. Earlier this year, at a NASA panel hearing, a Pentagon official reported that only a small percentage of identified cases (an estimated 2% to 5%) resisted conventional explanations, such as balloons or aircraft. Some of the remaining cases just didn't have enough data to begin formulating an explanation. Earth's skies are simply not awash with alien phenomena.

The stars, however, hold a different promise.

Over the last few decades, the science of astrobiology—the study of life in its cosmic context—has exploded. We have discovered that most stars in the sky host a family of worlds. Many of those stars host a planet that orbits at the right distance for liquid water to exist on its surface, one of the prerequisites for life to form. All these distant worlds—called "exoplanets" in astrophysics—have transformed the search for life in the cosmos. We now know exactly where to look for life and, even more remarkable, how to look.

Powerful instruments including the James Webb Space Telescope can peer into the atmospheres of these alien worlds to search for "signatures" of life's activity. Biosignatures include oxygen in the atmosphere that likely would not be there without life to produce it. Likewise, the combined activity of a technological civilization will imprint technosignatures in light from the host planet. I am the principal investigator of a NASA-funded effort to explore possible technosignatures. Our group, along with others, has already shown how industrial chemicals, artificial illumination and even solar energy collectors produce technosignatures that we may soon be able to detect with existing and planned telescopes.

People sometimes ask me how the discovery of alien life could matter if we don't have the chance to send a ship to collect a sample, or meet and communicate with "them" directly. What exactly will change if we do find, through a telescope, scientific evidence of extraterrestrial life?

Finding life of any kind beyond Earth would represent the most important, ground-breaking discovery in human history. Life, unlike any other physical system in the universe, creates, innovates and goes beyond itself. If you give me a star right after it forms, the laws of physics allow me to predict its future billions of years from now (other than small details). With a microbe, on the other hand, we simply cannot say what will happen over billions of years. Evolution could yield something as weird as a giant rabbit that can punch you in the face (a kangaroo).

That remarkable creative power means that even a single additional example of life out there would imply that, likely, there are a lot more examples. And if we allow for the possibility of other intelligent, technologically capable species, then it becomes truly impossible to know how far life can go.

The discovery of even a single other technological society would also offer an island of hope in the turbulent ocean of our history. Research my colleagues and I conducted in 2020 showed that any civilization we find would probably be older than us. Finding an exo-civilization could show us that somebody made it—that long-lived, sustainable civilizations are something the universe does. That means we might make it as well.

Consider what happened after another major astronomical discovery hundreds of years ago: that the Earth revolved around the sun, not the other way around. It turned out the sun didn't come up in the morning; our horizon spun down. Even though nothing had actually changed in people's lives, the simple facts dethroning the Earth from its central place in the cosmos played a central role in rewiring humanity's understanding of itself, and it helped prompt the Renaissance and Enlightenment.

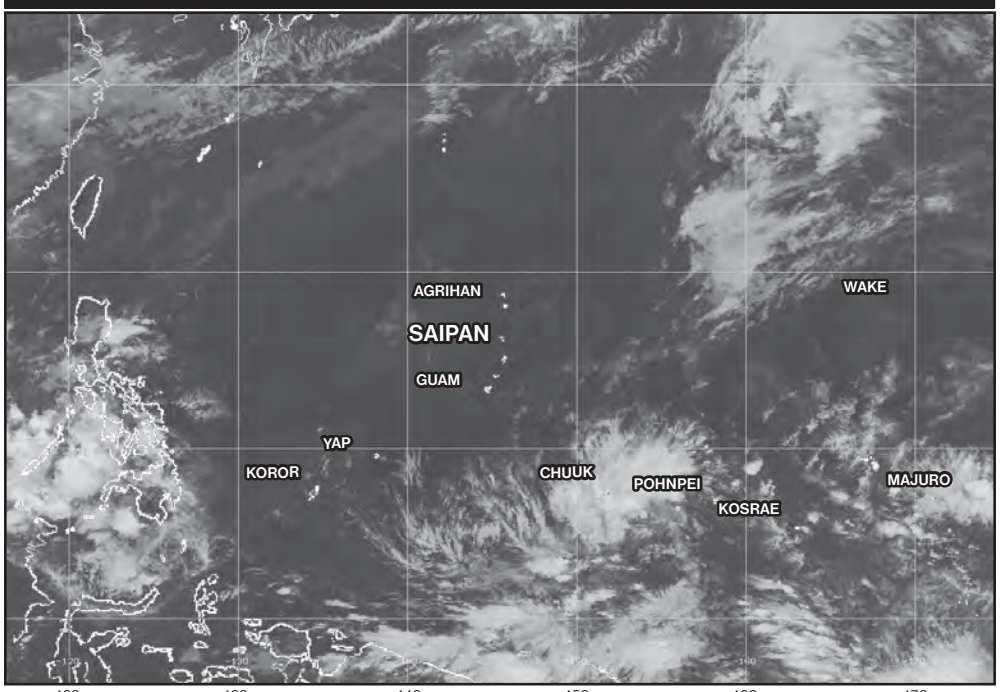
The search for alien life anywhere, no matter what its outcome, promises an even greater effect. Everything we understand about ourselves and the universe we inhabit would change. So are we ready?

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast to east winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast to east winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.	Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.	Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.
88 / 78°	88 / 78°	87 / 78°	87 / 78°	87 / 78°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 9:24 AM, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2023

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Doppler radar and satellite imagery indicate skies are partly cloudy with isolated showers across the Marianas. Winds are gentle to moderate, and buoys across the Marianas are reporting combined seas between 4 and 6 feet, primarily from a northeast swell.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: https://www.weather.gov/gum/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	85° / 79°
Palau	Partly Cloudy	84° / 78°
Yap	Partly Cloudy	83° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	87° / 80°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	86° / 77°
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	86° / 77°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	86° / 81°

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Fair/Wind	66° / 53°
Beijing	Fair	55° / 38°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	79° / 76°
Honolulu	Mostly Cloudy	81° / 74°
London	Partly Cloudy	59° / 45°
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	69° / 56°
Manila	Showers	88° / 79°
Melbourne	Cloudy	61° / 46°
Miami	Mostly Sunny	79° / 73°
New York	Fair	65° / 55°
Osaka	Sunny	71° / 55°
Paris	Partly Cloudy	61° / 46°
Busan	Partly Cloudy	68° / 55°
Rome	Sunny	68° / 45°
Salem	Mostly Sunny	75° / 54°
San Francisco	Sunny	60° / 51°
Seoul	Fair	55° / 33°
Tokyo	Sunny	79° / 61°
Washington, DC	Cloudy	56° / 51°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:15 AM	5:45 PM
Friday	6:16 AM	5:45 PM
Saturday	6:16 AM	5:45 PM
Sunday	6:17 AM	5:44 PM
Monday	6:17 AM	5:44 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	2:36 AM	3:05 PM	-
Friday	3:23 AM	3:38 PM	-
Saturday	4:10 AM	4:13 PM	-
Sunday	4:59 AM	4:50 PM	-
Monday	5:52 AM	5:31 PM	-

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
4:46 AM	High Tide	1.30
10:47 AM	Low Tide	0.45
5:20 PM	High Tide	1.70
11:54 PM	Low Tide	0.44

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF OCTOBER 30, 2023

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA076	9:50AM	10:30AM	Daily

SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)

UA824	7:05AM	9:45AM	1, 3, 5

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	Daily
UA193	7:50PM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	7:55PM	9:50PM	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

7C3403/2305	4:40AM	10:20PM	Daily
UA076/183	9:50AM	9:50PM	Daily via Guam
UA076/193	9:50AM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

TW308	2:15AM	6:10AM	Daily
7C3403	4:40AM	8:35AM	Daily
7C3405	4:35PM	8:25PM	Daily

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:45AM	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

UA825	9:25PM	2:00AM+1	2, 4, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA189	00:40AM	6:30AM	3, 6
PR110	10:05PM	3:55AM+1	Daily
UA192	10:40PM	6:30AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
UA184	10:55PM	4:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA189/174	00:40AM	8:45AM+1	3, 6 via Guam
UA192/174	10:40PM	8:45AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
UA184/174	10:55PM	8:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
7C2306/3406	11:15PM	3:30PM+1	Daily

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3406	10:10AM	3:30PM	Daily
TW307	7:45PM	1:15AM+1	Daily
7C3404	10:15PM	3:35AM+1	Daily

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF OCTOBER 30, 2023

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	SAIPAN	ROTA	08:30	09:00	Oct 21-31, 2023
1302	SAIPAN	ROTA	10:30	11:00	Daily
1303	SAIPAN	ROTA	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	ROTA	SAIPAN	9:30	10:00	Oct 21-31, 2023
3102	ROTA	SAIPAN	11:30	12:00	Saturday & Sunday
3103	ROTA	SAIPAN	13:30	14:00	Monday To Friday
3104	ROTA	SAIPAN	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	ROTA	GUAM	11:30	12:00	Monday To Friday

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	GUAM	ROTA	12:30	13:00	Monday To Friday

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1201	SAIPAN	TINIAN	7:30	7:45	Daily
1202	SAIPAN	TINIAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	SAIPAN	TINIAN	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	SAIPAN	TINIAN	10:00	10:15	Daily
1206	SAIPAN	TINIAN	15:00	15:15	Daily
1207	SAIPAN	TINIAN	16:00	16:15	Daily
1208	SAIPAN	TINIAN	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2101	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
2102	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	TINIAN	SAIPAN	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	TINIAN	SAIPAN	10:30	10:45	Daily
2106	TINIAN	SAIPAN	15:30	15:45	Daily
2107	TINIAN	SAIPAN	16:30	16:45	Daily
2108	TINIAN	SAIPAN	17:30	17:45	Daily

Business

Monika's Treasures opens in Garapan

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
EDITOR

Monika's Furniture is somewhat returning to its roots with the opening of Monika's Treasures in Garapan just across DFS Galleria.

Owner Monika Nugent, who the furniture store is obviously named after, said they opened the new location to better cater to the tourist market.

"Monika's Treasures—also known as Monika's Furniture—moved closer to Garapan to have more exposure to visitors and tourist and to gain more foot traffic. The new location is in the heart of Garapan. The new store is a lot smaller [than Monika's Furniture] but adequate for the location," she said.

Monika's Treasures is still in its soft-open phase and Nugent said the island's quintessential furniture shop will announce its grand opening soon.

"Monika's will still be importing teak furniture, but the new location next to the Joeten Hafa Adai shopping Center will focus mainly on smaller gift items and home décor. We strive to capture the most diversified selection of island-style living. I always handpick hand-crafted products that help accentuate your indoor/outdoor living space. From nautical wood carvings to weave baskets and purses, tropical paintings and island décor there is a treasure for everyone that visits the store," she said.

As for the trinkets for tourists, Nugent said like their furniture they are one-of-a-kind.

"Sterling silver jewelry with semi-precious stones are also gems. We are passionate about our hand-selected items from Indonesia, and you will be fascinated with the blend of uniqueness and beauty each piece holds."

Monika's Treasures is open daily from 12pm to 8pm. Monika's Furniture's current store hours are Monday-Friday, 12pm-6pm, and Saturday, 10am-6pm, and closed on Sundays.

MARK RABAGO
Monika's Treasures recently opened in Garapan just across DFS Galleria.

As for the current location of Monika's Furniture beside Hardt Eye Clinic, Nugent said they still have an ongoing sale on selected items.

Monika's Furniture and Monika's Treasures' progeny, Monika's Gallery, first opened as a little art gallery next to the old The Brass Restaurant where ABC Store along Beach Road in Garapan is located now. A few years later, Nugent moved the furniture store across the street where the ARC Building now stands.

So, in a way Monika's Treasures' opening in Garapan is a homecoming of sorts for Nugent.

"We were in Garapan for 20 years where we served tourists and the local market. It was there where we started to add teak furniture to our shipment from Indonesia since there wasn't a big selection on island. Teak is a lifetime investment and we have many happy returning customers," she said.

MARK RABAGO
Monika's Treasures owner Monika Nugent, left, and daughter Sandy Fleming.

MARK RABAGO
Monika's Treasures will have mainly smaller gift items and home décor.

MARK RABAGO
Just some of the sterling silver jewelry available at Monika's Treasures.

For more information on Monika's Treasures, call (670) 233-4403 and for Monika's Furniture, call (670) 233-4402. You can also email monikasfurniture670@gmail.com, visit their website at monikasfurniture.com, or look them up on Facebook or Instagram at monikasfurnituresaipan.

Biden to meet United Auto Workers president in Illinois

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Joe Biden on Thursday will meet in Belvidere, Illinois, with the head of the United Auto Workers union, and the two leaders are expected to highlight plans to reopen an auto factory that Stellantis wanted to close.

The White House announced in a statement Tuesday afternoon that during the visit, Biden will deliver remarks and meet with UAW members and the union's president, Shawn Fain.

The event will be an opportunity for the president and Fain to publicly showcase tentative contract agreements that ended a nearly 45-day union strike that targeted General Motors, Ford and Stellantis, maker of Jeep, Dodge and Ram vehicles.

Biden will "highlight his commitment to delivering for working families and creating good-paying union jobs, as well as the UAW's historic agreement that includes bringing thousands of UAW jobs back to Belvidere and reopening a plant," the White House said.

The contracts, if approved by 146,000 union members in the coming weeks, would dramatically raise pay for auto workers. In the deal with Stellantis, the union was able to save the idled factory in Belvidere, a small city of 25,000 on the northern edge of the state.

Biden made it a mission to cultivate a personal relationship with Fain, inviting him to a private Oval Office meeting on July 19 and calling him last week to wish him a happy 55th birthday. The UAW has yet to endorse Biden as members have yet to fully approve the contracts, making the union one of the major holdouts as other labor organizations have backed the Democratic president.

Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker will also attend Thursday's meeting, the White House said.

Under the deal with the UAW, Stellantis agreed to build a new gas-powered midsize pickup truck in Belvidere, plus open a new electric vehicle battery plant in the city. About 1,200 workers will be brought back to the idled plant and another 1,300 will be added at the battery factory.

WeWork seeks bankruptcy protection

NEW YORK (AP)—WeWork has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection, a stunning fall for the office-sharing company that once promised to upend the way people went to work around the world.

The filing comes at a time of incredible disruption in the commercial real estate market. The COVID-19 pandemic led to a spike in vacancies and major markets, from New York to San Francisco, are still struggling.

But it was an aggressive expansion in WeWork's early years, that led to the bulk of its current troubles. The company went public in October 2021 after an attempt two years earlier collapsed spectacularly. The debacle led to the ouster of founder and CEO Adam Neumann, whose erratic behavior and exorbitant spending spooked early investors.

Despite efforts to turn the company around since Neumann's departure—including significant cuts to operating costs and rising revenue—WeWork has struggled in a commercial real estate market that has been rocked by the rising cost of borrowing money, as well as a shifting dynamic for millions of office workers now checking into work remotely.

"I feel like (WeWork) has been imploding in slow motion," said Nicole Schmidt, an attorney and managing partner at investment banking firm Oberon Securities.

Sam Chandan, director of the Chao-Hon Chen Institute for Global Real Estate Finance at New York University's Stern School of Business, also pointed to WeWork's rapid expansion—and said it's important to separate its current situation from the future of various co-working models as a whole. He said overall demand for co-working space is expected to remain healthy and in some cases grow, but there are different models for delivering it.

Nation

Democrats win on abortion rights in off-year election

WASHINGTON (AP)—There was plenty in the early results of Tuesday's off-year election to make Democrats happy, but it shouldn't be enough to make them feel secure heading into next year's presidential election.

Abortion rights supporters won an Ohio ballot measure and the Democratic governor of beet-red Kentucky held onto his office by campaigning on reproductive rights and painting his opponent as extremist on abortion.

The off-year elections have major implications for both of those states and provide a snapshot of American politics heading into 2024. But two big names—Joe Biden and Donald Trump—weren't on the ballot.

Here are some key results from Tuesday's voting.

AP

A woman bows her head during a prayer at a watch party for opponents of Issue 1 at the Center for Christian Virtue in Columbus, Ohio, Tuesday, Nov. 7, 2023.

ABORTION REMAINS POTENT FOR DEMOCRATS

Democrats notched two early wins Tuesday night in Kentucky and Ohio, both states that voted for Trump in 2020. In both states, abortion was the main issue.

In Kentucky, Democratic Gov. Andy Beshear was reelected in a state that Trump had won by 26 percentage points. Beshear had criticized the abortion views of his Republican challenger, Attorney General Daniel Cameron, in debates and television ads. One Beshear ad featured a woman who miscarried after being raped by her stepfather at age 12 expressing disbelief at Cameron's opposition to abortion in cases of rape and incest.

In Ohio, a ballot measure preserving abortion rights passed in a state that Trump won by eight percentage points in 2020. Republicans had already tried to derail the measure by calling an unusual August referendum to make it harder to pass ballot measures, an initiative that was roundly rejected by Ohio voters.

The outcomes suggest a transformed political landscape since a conservative majority of the U.S. Supreme Court overturned a federal right to an abortion last year. Abortion rights measures have passed in a plethora of states as some other Republican-run states have instituted new bans on the procedure.

Abortion rights may not be a potent enough issue to swing an election on its own. Several GOP governors who supported new bans cruised to reelection last year, including Ohio's Mike DeWine, Florida's Ron DeSantis and Texas' Greg Abbott.

But the Kentucky governor's race shows it can still be a key element of a Democratic candidate's victory.

Beshear's father was a two-term governor and he has a long history of winning statewide elections. But abortion was his campaign's key issue. And that should worry Republicans in competitive races next year.

GOOD NIGHT FOR DEMOCRATS, BUT MAYBE NOT FOR 2024

It was a good night for Democrats following a series of wins in special elections and comes after a stronger performance in last year's midterms, which are usually crushing for the party in power in Washington.

But none of the races were an up-or-down decision on the incumbent president, Biden. And none featured Trump on the ballot or his ability to turbocharge turnout of infrequent voters.

It was too early to tell which party would control the Virginia statehouse. The state's Republican governor, Glenn Youngkin, pushed to flip control of the state senate to the GOP after winning the lower house and governorship in 2021. Virginia voted for Biden by 9 percentage points in 2020, and the fact that Democrats were sweating whether they'd be shut out there is a reminder of their precarious hold on power.

Democrats have performed well in recent special elections and did better than expected in 2022. It increasingly seems like the party starts from a position of strength. But it's not clear that translates to its 80-year-old president, who faces widespread skepticism about his job performance and whether he is too old to serve a second term.

We'll have to wait until 2024 to see how Biden fares.

HISTORIC FIRSTS

Political candidates broke barriers in a handful of wins Tuesday.

Former Biden White House aide Gabe Amo will become the first Black member of Congress from Rhode Island after winning the special election in that state's first congressional district.

The son of West African immigrants, Amo emerged from a 12-candidate September primary to succeed retiring Rep. David Cicilline. On Tuesday, Amo defeated Republican Gerry Leonard, a Marine veteran, in the heavily Democratic district.

And Philadelphia will have its first female mayor after Democrat Cherelle Parker defeated Republican David Oh in the overwhelmingly Democratic city.

Biden administration warns of major disruption at border

The Biden administration on Tuesday urged an appeals court to allow sweeping new asylum restrictions to stay in place, warning that halting them would be "highly disruptive" at the border.

The government is urging a panel of judges in Pasadena, California—two appointed by President Bill Clinton and one by President Donald Trump—to overturn a July ruling that sought to block the new asylum restrictions. The new restrictions made it far more difficult to qualify for asylum if a migrant didn't first apply online or traveled through another country, such as Mexico, and didn't seek protection there. They have remained in place during the appeal.

Although the judges didn't rule immediately and gave no indication how they were leaning, the arguments occurred against a backdrop of Senate Republicans seeking to legislate far-reaching changes to asylum eligibility as part of President Joe Biden's request for military aid to Ukraine and Israel.

Courts blocked similar measures under Trump but the Biden administration says its approach differs because it is coupled with new legal pathways to enter the country and creates exceptions. However, advocates represented by the American Civil Liberties Union, Center for Gender & Refugee Studies and National Immigrant Justice Center argue that they are recycled Trump-era policies that violate U.S. law allowing people to seek asylum no matter how and where they arrive.

A mobile app introduced in January allows asylum-seekers to make 1,450 appointments per day at official border crossings with Mexico, while the Biden administration has allowed up to 30,000 a month from Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua and Venezuela to pursue asylum if they apply online with a financial sponsor and arrive at an airport.

Those new pathways represent "a very significant difference" from Trump policies, said Brian Boynton, a Justice Department attorney. Boynton also noted that 12% of the 57,700 asylum-seekers who were subject to the new rule through September avoided it by proving "exceptionally compelling circumstances," including "acute medical emergency," "imminent and extreme threat to life or safety" or being a victim of human trafficking. ***(AP)***

House votes to censure Tlaib over Israel-Hamas rhetoric in stunning rebuke

WASHINGTON (AP)—The House voted late Tuesday to censure Democratic Rep. Rashida Tlaib of Michigan—the only Palestinian American in Congress—an extraordinary rebuke of her rhetoric about the Israel-Hamas war.

The 234-188 tally came after enough Democrats joined with Republicans to censure Tlaib, a punishment one step below expulsion from the House. The three-term congresswoman has long been a target of criticism for her views on the decades-long conflict in the Middle East.

The debate on the censure resolution on Tuesday afternoon was emotional and intense. Republican Rep. Rich McCormick of Georgia pushed the measure in response to what he called Tlaib's promotion of antisemitic rhetoric. He said she has "levied unbelievable falsehoods about our greatest ally, Israel, and the attack on October 7."

With other Democrats standing by her side, Tlaib defended her stance, saying she "will not be silenced and I will not let you distort my words." She added that her criticism of the Jewish state has always been directed toward its government and its leadership under Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

"It is important to separate people and government," she said. "The idea that criticizing the government of Israel is antisemitic sets a very dangerous precedent. And it's been used to silence diverse voices speaking up for human rights across our nation."

That criticism reached new heights after the Oct. 7 attack by the terrorist group Hamas left hundreds of Israelis dead and scores injured. Tlaib, who has family in the West Bank, came under heavy reproval after she failed to immediately condemn Hamas after the attack.

All Democrats initially stood by Tlaib and helped defeat the first censure resolution against her last week. But since then, many of her colleagues, including prominent Jewish members, have become more conflicted about her rhetoric about the war, especially because of a slogan she has used frequently that is widely seen as calling for the eradication of Israel.

Ultimately, more than 20 of them joined Republicans on Tuesday night to censure her after an effort to shelve the measure failed earlier in the day.

The latest censure push resulted in a dramatic vote on the House floor amid political tensions over the ongoing, deadly Israel-Hamas war. While the majority of both parties have historically stood firmly on the side of Israel, divisions have emerged in the Democratic Party about the American response.

Rep. Brad Schneider, D-Ill., the lone Democrat to vote with Republicans on Tuesday to advance the censure resolution, said he believed it was important to debate the slogan "from the river to the sea."

"It is nothing else but the call for the destruction of Israel and murder of Jews," the Jewish Democrat said. "I will always defend the right to free speech. Tlaib has the right to say whatever she wants."

Asia

A NEW SURVEY OF WEALTHY NATIONS FINDS

Favorable views are rising for the US; going down for China

AP

United States and Chinese flags are set up before a meeting between Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing, on July 8, 2023.

WASHINGTON (AP)—Public opinions in 24 countries—mostly rich nations—have grown more favorable of the United States than of China, according to the latest survey by the Washington-based Pew Research Center.

The gap in favorability of the world's two largest economies widened after views of the U.S. rebounded since President Joe Biden took office in 2021, the report found. Favorable views of both countries fell in 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic began, but the ratings for China remained low during the latest survey, the Pew center said, "leading to some of the largest gaps in these views we have seen in our polling."

The report, released Monday, comes as the two countries are intensely competing for global influence. President Xi Jinping wants China to be respected and trusted around the world, while Biden has made it a priority to mend relationships with U.S. allies.

"This year, overall views of the United States are much more positive than views of China in most places surveyed," the report said. "But this has not always been the case in our nearly two decades of favorability polling, and views of the countries have fluctuated alongside views of their leaders."

The 2019 survey recorded a median of 55% across 22 countries showing favorable views of the U.S., compared to a median of 39% of China.

In 2020, when Pew conducted surveys in a much smaller set of countries because of the pandemic, medians of 38% and 25% had favorable views of the U.S. and China, respectively. Of the same countries in 2023, medians of 58% and 21% had positive views of the U.S. and China, respectively. Medians are only of the 10 countries surveyed in both years, exclusive of the U.S. and Australia, Pew's research analysts said.

In the latest survey, the gaps were most significant in Poland, Japan and South Korea, where more than 70% of the respondents rated the U.S. positively, compared with fewer than 30% who viewed China favorably, said Pew, which conducted nationally representative surveys in 24 countries in 2023.

Japan and South Korea, neighbors of China, have had a historically tense relationship with each other. In a diplomatic breakthrough, Biden held a trilateral summit with Japan's prime minister and South Korea's president at Camp David in August, hailed by supporters as forging a strong partnership countering China's influence in the Indo-Pacific region.

N. Korea threatens to respond to anti-North propaganda leaflets with a 'shower of shells'

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea criticized rival South Korea on Wednesday for removing a law that banned private activists from sending anti-Pyongyang propaganda leaflets to the North, insisting that such activities amount to psychological warfare and threatening to respond with a "shower of shells."

The statement published by North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency was the first time state media commented on the September decision by South Korea's Constitutional Court to invalidate a 2020 law that criminalized leafleting. The decision was based on concerns that it excessively restricted free speech.

The ruling came in response to a complaint filed by North Korean defector-activists in the South. They included Park Sang-hak, who has been a frequent target of the North Korean government's anger for his yearslong campaign of flying leaflets across the border with giant balloons.

Park and other defectors from the North for years have used huge helium-filled balloons to launch leaflets criticizing Kim's leadership, his nuclear weapons ambitions and the country's dismal human rights record. The leaflets are often packaged with U.S. dollar bills and USB sticks containing information about world news.

North Korea is extremely sensitive about any outside attempt to undermine the leadership of authoritarian ruler Kim Jong Un as he maintains tight control over the country's 26 million people while severely restricting their access to foreign news.

The law, crafted by the previous liberal government in Seoul that pursued inter-Korean engagement, was passed six months after the North expressed its frustration over the leaflets by blowing up an inter-Korean liaison office in the North Korean border town of Kaesong in June 2020.

World

Israel foresees control of Gaza security after war

KHAN YOUNIS, Gaza Strip (AP)—Israeli ground forces were battling Hamas fighters deep inside Gaza's largest city, Israel said Tuesday. The push signals a major new stage in the month-old conflict, and its leaders foresee controlling the enclave's security after the war.

The push into Gaza City guarantees that the already staggering death toll will rise further, while comments from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu about controlling Gaza's security for "an indefinite period" pointed to the uncertain endgame of a war that Israel says will be long and difficult.

Israeli ground troops have battled Palestinian militants inside Gaza for over a week, cutting the territory in half and encircling Gaza City. The army's chief spokesperson, Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari, said Israeli ground forces "are located right now in a ground operation in the depths of Gaza City and putting great pressure on Hamas."

Hamas spokesperson Ghazi Hamad, speaking Tuesday from Beirut, denied that Israeli forces were making any significant military gains or that they had advanced deep into Gaza City.

"They never give the people the truth," Hamad said. He added that numerous Israeli soldiers were killed Monday and "many tanks were destroyed."

"The Palestinians fight and fight and fight against Israel, until we end the occupation," said Hamad, who left Gaza days before Hamas' Oct. 7 incursion in southern Israel, which sparked the war.

The Associated Press could not independently verify the claims of either side.

Israelis commemorated the 30th day—a milestone in Jewish mourning—since the Hamas incursion, which killed 1,400 people. About 240 people Hamas abducted during the attack remain in Gaza, and more than 250,000 Israelis have evacuated homes near the borders of Gaza and Lebanon as rockets were continuously fired into Israel.

Hundreds of family members of the hostages held in Gaza joined supporters Tuesday beside the Western Wall in Jerusalem to call for the release of their loved ones.

"The hostages have been underground in Gaza for 32 days. I cry out to every single person here and every single person on the planet to make it your mission to free these souls," said Rachel Goldberg, a prominent spokesperson for the hostage families, her voice breaking.

A month of relentless bombardment in Gaza since the Hamas attack has killed more than 10,300 Palestinians—two-thirds of them women and minors, according to the Health Ministry of the Hamas-run territory. More than 2,300 are believed to be buried from strikes that reduced entire city blocks to rubble.

Around 70% of Gaza's 2.3 million people have fled their homes, and many of them are crowded into schools-turned-shelters run by the United Nations. Civilians in Gaza are relying on a trickle of aid and their own daily foraging for food and water from supplies that have dwindled after weeks of siege.

FLEEING SOUTH

Israel unleashed another wave of strikes across the Gaza Strip on Tuesday as hundreds more Palestinians fled Gaza City to the south.

Some arrived on donkey carts, most on foot, some pushing elderly relatives in wheelchairs, all visibly exhausted. Many had nothing but the clothes on their backs.

Hundreds of thousands have heeded Israeli orders to head to the southern part of Gaza, out of the ground assault's path. Others are afraid to do so since Israeli troops control part of the north-south route. Bombardment of the south has also continued.

An Israeli airstrike destroyed several homes early Tuesday in Khan Younis. An Associated Press journalist at the scene saw first responders pulling five bodies—including three dead children—from the rubble. One man wept as he carried a bloodied young girl, until a rescue worker pried her from his arms, saying, "Let her go, let her go," to rush her to an ambulance.

AP video at a nearby hospital showed a woman desperately searching for her son, then crying and kissing him when she found him, half-naked and bloodied, but apparently without serious injuries. A girl sobbed next to a baby on a stretcher, apparently dead.

"We were sleeping—babies, children, elderly," said one survivor, Ahmad al-Najjar, who is the general director at the Education Ministry in Gaza.

In the town of Deir al-Balah, rescue workers brought out at least four dead and a number of wounded children from the wreckage of a flattened building, witnesses said.

Israel says it targets Hamas fighters and infrastructure and accuses the group of endangering civilians by operating among them.

At a school in Khan Younis, thousands of displaced people were living in classrooms and on the playground. One of them, Suhaila al-Najjar, said the past month was filled with sleepless nights.

"What's to come? How will we live? Bakeries have closed, there's no gas. What will we eat?" she said.

ISRAEL TO MAINTAIN CONTROL

Israel has vowed to remove Hamas from power and crush its military capabilities—but neither Israel nor its main ally, the United States, has said what would come next.

Netanyahu told ABC News that Gaza should be governed by "those who don't want to continue the way of Hamas," without elaborating.

"I think Israel will, for an indefinite period, will have the overall security responsibility because we've seen what happens when we don't have it. When we don't have that security responsibility, what we have is the eruption of Hamas terror on a scale that we couldn't imagine," he said.

Netanyahu did not make clear what shape that security control would take. The White House reiterated Tuesday that President Joe Biden does not support an Israeli reoccupation of the Gaza Strip after the war.

"We do think that there needs to be a healthy set of conversations about what post-conflict Gaza looks like and what governance looks like," said White House National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby, adding that he would leave it to Netanyahu to clarify what he means by "indefinite."

Israeli officials say the offensive against Hamas will last for some time and acknowledge that they have not yet formulated a concrete plan for what comes after the war. The defense minister has said Israel does not seek a long-term reoccupation of Gaza but predicted a lengthy phase of low-intensity fighting against "pockets of resistance." Other officials have spoken about establishing a buffer zone that would keep Palestinians away from the Israeli border.

"There are a number of options being discussed for The Day After Hamas," said Ophir Falk, a senior adviser to Netanyahu. "The common denominator of all the plans is that 1) there is no Hamas 2) that Gaza is demilitarized 3) Gaza is deradicalized."

Environment

BOB EDME
A surfer rides a wave in the Atlantic Ocean in Biarritz, southwestern France, Oct. 7, 2023.

OCTOBER OBLITERATES TEMP RECORDS;

2023 will be hottest year on record

By MELINA WALLING
Associated Press

This October was the hottest on record globally, 1.7 degrees Celsius (3.1 degrees Fahrenheit) warmer than the pre-industrial average for the month—and the fifth straight month with such a mark in what will now almost certainly be the warmest year ever recorded.

October was a whopping 0.4 degrees Celsius (0.7 degrees Fahrenheit) warmer than the previous record for the month in 2019, surprising even Samantha Burgess, deputy director of the Copernicus Climate Change Service, the European climate agency that routinely publishes monthly bulletins observing global surface air and sea temperatures, among other data.

"The amount that we're smashing records by is shocking," Burgess said.

After the cumulative warming of these past several months, it's virtually guaranteed that 2023 will be the hottest year on record, according to Copernicus.

Scientists monitor climate variables to gain an understanding of how our planet is evolving as a result of human-generated greenhouse gas emissions. A warmer planet means more extreme and intense weather events like severe drought or hurricanes that hold more water, said Peter Schlosser, vice president and vice provost of the Global Futures Laboratory at Arizona State University. He is not involved with Copernicus.

"This is a clear sign that we are going into a climate regime that will have more impact on more people," Schlosser said. "We better take this warning that we actually should have taken 50 years ago or more and draw the right conclusions."

This year has been so exceptionally hot in part because oceans have been warming, which means they are doing less to counteract global warming than in the past. Historically, the ocean has absorbed as much as 90% of the excess heat from climate change, Burgess said. And in the midst of an El Nino, a natural climate cycle that temporarily warms parts of the ocean and drives weather changes around the world, more warming can be expected in the coming months, she added.

Schlosser said that means the world should expect more records to be broken as a result of that warming, but the question is whether they will come in smaller steps going forward. He added that the planet is already exceeding the 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) of warming since pre-industrial times that the Paris agreement was aimed at capping, and that the planet hasn't yet seen the full impact of that warming. Now, he, Burgess and other scientists say, the need for action—to stop planet-warming emissions—is urgent.

"It's so much more expensive to keep burning these fossil fuels than it would be to stop doing it. That's basically what it shows," said Friederike Otto, a climate scientist at Imperial College London. "And of course, you don't see that when you just look at the records being broken and not at the people and systems that are suffering, but that—that is what matters."

NZ's ex-premier Ardern to join group to rally for environment action

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—Former New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern will work alongside leaders from Conservation International to advocate for climate action and better treatment of the environment, the group said Monday.

Conservation International said Ardern has become its sixth Arnhold Distinguished Fellow and would serve a two-year term to advocate internationally, especially on issues affecting the Pacific and Antarctica. The group said the role was considered part-time and came with a stipend.

It is one several new roles Ardern has announced since unexpectedly stepping down as prime minister in January. She is also completing dual fellowships at Harvard University's Kennedy School and writing a book on leadership.

Ardern

"From the beginning of my time in the New Zealand Parliament, I've advocated for global climate action," Ardern said in a statement. "My passion and sense of urgency on this issue has only increased over the last 15 years, especially as I witnessed firsthand the impact of climate change in our region."

Ardern's government joined other nations in 2020 by symbolically declaring a climate emergency. Though the declaration came without any new statutory powers or money, she said at the time that it acknowledged the burden the next generation faces.

"For them, it is instinctual, it is tangible, it is real," Ardern said. "It is about the country they will inherit."

Ardern also banned new exploration for offshore oil and gas and plastic shopping bags.

Conservation International CEO M. Sanjayan said Ardern's appointment was a win for the entire conservation and climate movement, adding that she "has modeled the kind of leadership, empathy and determination required to deliver crucial environmental and climate solutions."

Just 37 when she became prime minister in 2017, Ardern became a global icon of the left. When she stepped down she said she no longer had "enough in the tank" to do the job justice. Her political popularity in New Zealand had been fading, and her successor Chris Hipkins suffered a heavy defeat in a general election last month.

Kenya declares a surprise public holiday for national campaign to plant 15 billion trees

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP)—The Kenyan government announced Monday a surprise public holiday on Nov. 13 for a nationwide tree planting day, part of its ambitious plan to plant 15 billion trees by 2032

Interior Minister Kithure Kindiki made the announcement via a gazette notice posted on the social network X, formerly known as Twitter, following a cabinet meeting held last week and chaired by President William Ruto.

"The Government has declared a special holiday on Monday, November 13, 2023, during which the public across the Country shall be expected to plant trees as a patriotic contribution to the national efforts to save our Country from the devastating effects of Climate Change," said Kindiki.

Kenya's current forest cover currently stands at about 7% but the government has set aside more than $80 million this financial year, as it bids to increase tree cover to more than 10%.

Trees store carbon, one of the main drivers of global warming. In contrast, deforestation accelerates climate change: it halts plant photosynthesis, so the trees are no longer taking up carbon. It's also often accompanied by burning, which releases lots of carbon dioxide.

Climate change is worsening droughts in the Horn of Africa, including Kenya, where rains have failed for five seasons in a row.

The Kenyan environment, climate change and forestry ministry said it would provide tree seedlings for what it said was "an unprecedented show of commitment by the Government towards our climate action obligations"

"It is a moment for Kenyans to stand in solidarity in the defense of our environment, it's a 'hummingbird' contribution day, all of us pulling together to fight back the climate change crisis "said Environment Minister Soipan Tuya

President Ruto has made the National Landscape and Ecosystem Restoration Program a priority since assuming the presidency in September 2022.

His plans drew praises from King Charles III, who was in Kenya last week for his first visit to an African nation since he ascended the throne last year.

"Having been planting trees for most of my life, I thought I was doing rather well, but your ambition for planting 15 billion trees makes me admire your efforts," King Charles said at a state banquet.

While in the country, Charles planted a tree at the State House in the capital Nairobi and at the Karura forest, which is associated with the late environmentalist and Nobel laureate Wangari Maathai.

Life & Style

Inaugural Earthshot Prize names five winners

SINGAPORE (AP)—An Indian maker of solar-powered dryers, a soil carbon marketplace and groups that work to make electric car batteries cleaner, restore Andean forests and deter illegal fishing were awarded the Earthshot Prize at a ceremony in Singapore.

Britain's Prince William, whose Royal Foundation charity launched the 10-year award program in 2020, said at the ceremony Tuesday that the solutions presented by all 15 finalists proved that "hope does remain" as the devastating effects of climate change are felt across the world.

The winners, who each won 1 million pounds ($1.2 million) to scale up their innovations, are:

—Acción Andina, for a community-based initiative in South America bringing people together to restore high forests in the Andes mountain;

—India's S4S Technologies, for solar-powered dryers and processing equipment that help farmers preserve their crops and combat food waste;

—Boomitra, for removing emissions and helping boost farmer profits in Asia, South America and Africa by incentivizing land restoration through a verified carbon-credit marketplace;

—Hong Kong company GRST, for developing a way to make batteries for electric vehicles pollute less and are easier to recycle;

—Global non-profit WildAid Marine Program, for working with governments to bolster enforcement to deter illegal fishing and strengthen ocean conservation.

"Our winners and all our finalists remind us that, no matter where you are on our planet, the spirit of ingenuity, and the ability to inspire change, surrounds us all," William said. He urged people to become an "architect of change" to ensure a safer planet for future generations.

Apart from the prize money awarded to the winners, all 15 finalists will receive a year of technical support and resources to help them accelerate and expand their work.

The other finalists included a U.S. company that found a way to recycle polycotton fabrics; a tree-planting program in Freetown, Sierra Leone; an anti-smog movement in Poland; and a U.K. company making low-emission tires.

The award presenters in the categories of nature protection, clean air, ocean revival, waste elimination and climate change included actors Cate Blanchett, Donnie Yen, Lana Condor and Nomzamo Mbatha, as well as wildlife conservationist Robert Irwin.

The awards ceremony was the third for the Earthshot Prize and the first in Asia. It was launched to shore up innovative solutions and technologies against the planet's greatest environmental perils.

The winners were chosen by a 13-member council that includes Jordan's Queen Rania, Chinese business magnate Jack Ma, British fashion designer Stella McCartney, broadcaster David Attenborough, World Trade Organization chief Ngozi Okonjo-Iweale and former NBA star Yao Ming.

In line with the sustainability theme, William wore a 10-year-old dark green blazer by Alexander McQueen, and he and other presenters walked a "green carpet." Yen also donned an old suit, while South African actor Mbatha wore a bright navy blue gown by McCartney, known for her eco-friendly clothing.

Blue diamond sells for more than $44 million at Christie's auction in Geneva

AP

A Christie's employee displays "Bleu Royal," a rare 17.61 carats internally flawless fancy vivid blue pear shaped diamond, during a preview at the Christie's, in Geneva, Switzerland, Thursday, Nov. 2, 2023.

GENEVA (AP)—The largest fancy vivid blue diamond to ever come to auction sold Tuesday for more than $44 million, far outstripping the pre-sale estimate, Christie's said.

The "Bleu Royal"—a ring featuring a fancy vivid blue pear-shaped diamond of 17.61 carats—was one of the standout pieces to go under the hammer at the auction house for Geneva's Luxury Week.

Christie's had estimated the ring would fetch around $35 million.

The auction house said the sale made the "Bleu Royal" the most expensive jewel sold at auction this year.

Christie's said the gemstone would be handed over to another private collection for the first time in 40 years.

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Díez wins Cervantes Prize, the Spanish-speaking world's top literary honor

MADRID (AP)—Spanish author Luis Mateo Díez has been awarded the Cervantes Prize, the Spanish-speaking world's highest literary honor, Culture Minister Miquel Iceta said Tuesday. The prizes are presented each April 23 on the anniversary of the death in 1616 of Miguel de Cervantes, author of "Don Quixote," in a ceremony attended by King Felipe VI. Iceta praised Díez, 81, "for being one of the great narrators of the Spanish language, heir to the Cervantes spirit." He described him as a "writer in the face of all adversity, a creator of imaginary worlds and territories with a prose, a sagacity and a style that make (his work) unique in literature of the highest level." The award includes prize money of 125,000 euros ($134,000).

Japan's Nintendo is developing a live-action 'The Legend of Zelda'

TOKYO (AP)—Nintendo is developing a live-action film based on its hit video game "The Legend of Zelda," the Japanese company behind the Super Mario franchise said Wednesday. The film, with financing from Sony Pictures Entertainment as well as its own investment, will be directed by Wes Ball, the American director of the upcoming "Planet of the Apes" film. It's being co-produced by Nintendo and Arad Productions Inc., which is behind the live-action Spider-Man films and headed by Avi Arad. The move highlights Kyoto-based Nintendo's strategy to leverage various aspects of its business, including theme parks, merchandising and movies, to boost machine and software sales, and vice versa. That strategy has met success. Its animation film "The Super Mario Bros. Movie," released earlier this year, has raked in more than $1.3 billion and drew nearly 170 million people worldwide.

Climate activists smash glass protecting Velazquez's Venus painting

LONDON (AP)—Two climate change protesters were arrested Monday after they smashed a protective glass panel covering a famous Diego Velázquez oil painting at London's National Gallery, police said Monday. The two activists from the group Just Stop Oil targeted Velázquez's "The Toilet of Venus," also known as "The Rokeby Venus," with small hammers. Photos showed the protective glass panel punctured with several holes. Just Stop Oil, which has previously led similar protests targeting famous artworks and public buildings, said Monday's action was to demand Britain's government immediately halt all licensing for the exploration, development and production of fossil fuels in the U.K. The group said Monday that the two activists chose to target Velázquez's 17th-century oil painting, one of the Spanish artist's most celebrated masterpieces, because it was previously slashed as part of the suffragette movement calling for women's rights in 1914.

Wife's online chats with man irk hovering husband

DEAR ABBY: I discovered last year that my wife was exchanging flirty texts with a local man and had been doing so for years. I found out when I uncovered an image of an adult toy in her phone's deleted images. At the time, I nearly divorced her, but although our marriage went through a tumultuous period, we are still together.

She told me then she'd stop communicating with this man, but a few months ago, she reached out to him for help with a social media account issue she had, and now they chat daily on social media. Although it seems platonic now, it bothers me and has been a source of contention in our marriage. She says she has problems finding female friends, that he understands her medical issues and he's her friend, and they are back to messaging regularly. I can see what's being said, but it still gets me upset.

Am I an ogre for asking her to stop? She says that she has changed her mind and will continue to contact him. I feel like our marriage may be on rocky ground again, but she thinks I am being awful for saying anything. What are your thoughts?

UPSET HUBBY IN ALABAMA

DEAR UPSET HUBBY: I am sorry you feel so insecure, which must be painful. You didn't mention in what context your wife had a deleted image of a sex toy. Many people shop for them online and couples enjoy them together. During the COVID-19 pandemic, sales of adult toys went through the roof.

You say that you read all of the communications between your wife and her male (platonic) friend. Why isn't that enough? Women are allowed to have male friends, and these days, many of them do. If your marriage is in trouble, perhaps the cause is your ongoing effort to control her. It might improve if you back off.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My son, who is 5, has a rare spinal cord injury from birth. He can crawl, but he does not walk well. We have spent many months and a lot of money ensuring he is getting the best physical therapy and medical care possible for his condition, and we adhere closely to the medical advice of these experts.

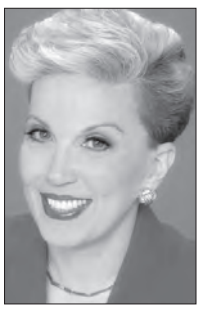
My mother, who lives 2,000 miles away, loves my son and wants to spend time with him. However, whenever we visit, she obsesses over the fact that my son can't walk well. I have reminded her not to fixate on his disability and to just enjoy time with him, which is what my son wants. But during this last visit, she told him "big boys walk, they don't crawl." And, "Try harder to walk."

My son has tearfully asked me twice if he can still be a big boy and crawl. (He also uses a wheelchair). I'm fed up with my mother and would prefer to keep her away from my son, but I don't want to create a dramatic familial rift. Advice?

GOOD MOM IN MONTANA

DEAR ABBY

By Abigail Van Buren
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

DEAR MOM: It is your duty as a mother to protect your son from harm. Tell your "helpful" mother that if she says anything again to shame him, it will be the last time she sees him. The person who creates the familial rift won't be you, it will be your incredibly ignorant and insensitive mother.

■ ■ ■

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

WE'RE OUT OF CHEEZ DOODLES, COOKIES, DONUTS AND CHIPS
CORRECTION, WE ARE NOT OUT OF CHIPS
MUNCH! MUNCH! MUNCH! MUNCH!
OKAY, NOW WE ARE
JIM DAVIS 11-9

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

DAD IS WEIRD.
YOU'RE JUST FIGURING THAT OUT?
HE'S TRYING WRITING IN WEIRD SPOTS TO SEE IF IT HELPS.
I'M NOT EVEN SURE WHERE HE IS TODAY, THE BIG WEIRDO.
I CAN HEAR YOU UP HERE, YOU KNOW.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

HA! HA HA! HAW BLAH! HA! HA!
THAT WAS ONE FUNNY INSURANCE COMMERCIAL.
YEAH, THEY SHOULD MAKE AN ENTIRE SHOW OF FUNNY INSURANCE COMMERCIALS WITH OCCASIONAL FOUR-MINUTE BREAKS FEATURING BORING TALK SHOWS.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

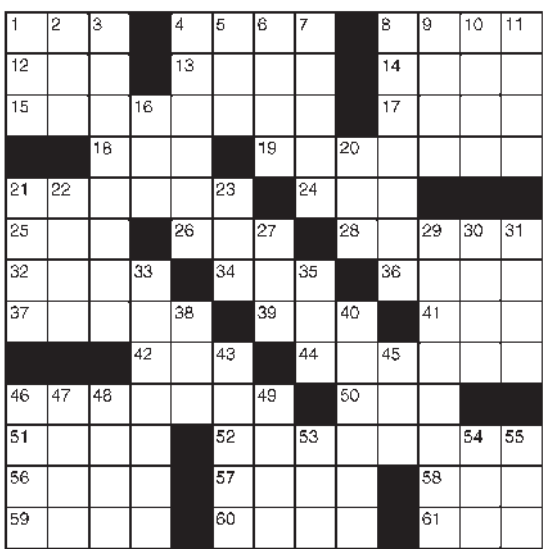
ACROSS
1 Mimic
4 Detail
8 Assess
12 Feminine principle
13 Shopper's delight
14 Nobel Prize subj.
15 100%
17 Scurry
18 Savings plan acronym
19 Many Instagram photos
21 Square one
24 Seminary subj.
25 Cardinal cap letters
26 Cover
28 Croc's kin
32 Obey
34 Knee protector
36 Comedian Kaplan
37 Plus
39 Russian space station
41 "Diamonds" singer
42 Vegas opener?
44 Snacked (on)
46 Sampling wines
50 Tibetan bovine
51 Sweet sandwich
52 Weaponry
56 Actress Hatcher
57 Occupy
58 Formerly known as
59 Stated
60 "Les États- —"
61 Delta's one-time rival

DOWN
1 Nay undoer
2 Brooch
3 Grants a right to
4 Tel Aviv's land
5 Menlo Park monogram
6 Building wings
7 "Twilight" author Stephenie
8 Danger sign
9 "Superfood" berry
10 Rent
11 Tolkien creatures
16 Apr. check casher
20 Piano support
21 Fed. workplace monitor
22 Salt Lake City squad
23 Bit of advice
27 River blocker
29 Uzbek capital
30 Theater award
31 Peruse
33 Shoulder muscle
35 Cacophony
38 — chi
40 Kings and queens
43 Major mix-up
45 Muppet eagle
46 Youngsters
47 Bailiwick
48 LPGA star Pak
49 Wide smile
53 Roman 1051
54 Up-to-date
55 Brewed drink

Solution time: 24 mins.

S	A	M		I	L	E	A	H		Z	A	N	L
E	M	U		A	A	R	E			I	M	I	N
M	I	L		Y	U	K	O	N	G	O	L	D	
I	D	F	A	I			S	F	Z				
			R	C	T	C		T	A	R	T	S	
S	C	A	F	F	O	I	D		G	O	A	I	
C	U	R		T	R	I	E	D		M	L	I	
C	B	I	F		O	V	F	R	S	O	I	D	
N	E	A	R	S		E	D	E	N				
			A	H	I			S	I	U	R	S	
H	O	U	S	F	H	O	I	D		S	I	A	
A	O	N	F		O	D	I	F		F	M	T	
G	O	O	D		P	F	N	N		S	F	F	

Yesterday's answer 11-9



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955!** 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Nick Lachey, 50; Eric Dane, 51; Susan Tedeschi, 53; Lou Ferrigno, 72.

Happy Birthday: Focus on what makes you happy. Spending time with people who bring out the best in you or enjoy the same things as you will keep you updated. Look for opportunities that stimulate your mind and help you bring about positive change. Too much time alone will weigh you down; explore what excites you and surround yourself with thought-provoking people and pastimes. Your numbers are 6, 14, 26, 28, 32, 34, 46.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Define what you want to do next, and consider the prep work involved that will position you for success. How you approach your goals will make a difference. Plan to look your best and prepare to be at the top of your game. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Keep tabs on what everyone else is doing, and be prepared to pick up the slack where necessary. Call the shots, make the moves and secure your position. It's time to put yourself first and engage in what will bring you joy. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Surround yourself with people who share your beliefs and enjoy the same pastimes as you. Refuse to get swept into someone else's dream where you do the work, but don't enjoy the rewards. Self-improvement and feeling good about yourself and what you accomplish are necessary. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Take better care of yourself and your surroundings. Don't let laziness lead to poor relationships with loved ones. Participation will pick you up and encourage you to be helpful. The more you do for others, the better you will feel about yourself. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Pay attention to friends, relatives and what's important to you. Take care of your emotional and physical well-being, and sort through any matters that bring you down or stand between you and what you want to accomplish. Make loyalty a priority. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Get moving and don't look back. You have plenty to gain by staying on top of your game and doing your best. Your attention to detail will help you outmaneuver anyone trying to challenge you. Transparency and communication will pay off. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Take care of yourself first. Spend more time on what matters and prepare for what you want to do next. Refuse to let anyone capitalize on your kindness and desire to help when you should be helping yourself. Make romance a priority. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Help others, share your thoughts and make yourself useful. Volunteering, making a difference and staying active will lead to new beginnings and hope for a better future. Create opportunities by taking steps that lead to a healthy and prosperous lifestyle. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Make your entrance and light up the room. Refuse to let anyone overshadow you. Make your presence felt, and you'll create opportunities to increase your profile and others' awareness of what you can contribute. Let peace, love and gratitude shine through. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Don't let anyone put you in a vulnerable position. Choose your words wisely and refuse to let emotional meddling distract you from reaching your objective. A change at home will result in a window of opportunity. Take advantage of your good fortune. ✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Pay attention to your needs and satisfy your soul. Keep your money, possessions, personal papers and passwords protected. Listen carefully and fact-check everything you hear before you share information. ✪✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Take the high road and don't look back. Use your skills to reach your destination of choice, and others will take an interest and support your plan. A financial change looks promising, and a proactive approach to life, love and happiness will pay dividends. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are engaging, vibrant and quick-witted. You are compassionate and observant.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

5			3	6				
					2		9	6
9		6	1	8		4		
	7			3	1			2
8					5	9	1	
		9		2			3	
		1	7				8	
7	5			9	3			
	9			1	8	5	2	

Difficulty: ★★★ 11/9

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

2	7	1	5	9	8	3	6	4
9	4	8	6	7	3	1	5	2
3	5	6	1	4	2	7	8	9
4	1	3	9	5	7	8	2	6
8	6	5	4	2	1	9	3	7
7	2	9	8	3	6	5	4	1
5	9	2	3	1	4	6	7	8
6	3	4	7	8	9	2	1	5
1	8	7	2	6	5	4	9	3

Difficulty: ★★★ 11/8

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WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

CAVE SPELUNKERS **Solution: 10 letters**

C	D	N	I	W	T	I	U	S	T	E	W	T	H	T
A	E	S	V	A	L	G	E	A	R	L	D	R	E	A
L	L	L	O	T	T	O	R	G	I	K	F	A	L	O
A	B	A	H	E	S	P	O	R	D	C	L	I	M	B
R	U	T	C	R	E	L	L	P	E	U	A	L	E	P
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Bats, Belt, Boat, Boots, Buckle, Canyon, Compass, Crawl, Crystals, Damp, Dark, Depth, Drops, Echo, Enter, Exit, Explore, Flashlight, Gear, Grotto, Harness, Headlamp, Helmet, Hike, Hole, Knee Pads, Ladder, Limestone, Mineral, Navigate, Ocean, Pool, Ride, Rock, Rope, Sail, Sea Level, Soluble, Steep, Stream, Trails, Trip, Tunnel, Underground, Waterfall, Wetsuit, Wind

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Victor Wembanyama's NBA education is underway

By TIM REYNOLDS AP
BASKETBALL WRITER

» French teen is passing the early tests

Here's some of what San Antonio's Victor Wembanyama has experienced so far in the NBA: Scoring 38 points in a game, playing in a back-to-back for the first time, being part of two 40-point losses, wasting a huge lead and losing, overcoming a huge deficit and winning.

It's been an education.

And by all accounts, the French rookie who stands nearly 7-foot-4 is passing the tests.

Wembanyama's numbers so far—19.4 points, 8.4 rebounds and 2.6 blocks per game. The last player to have such averages over the first seven games of his career was Shaquille O'Neal in 1992. Back then, the consensus was O'Neal was one of a kind. The refrains are familiar today.

"We've never seen anything like this," Indiana coach Rick Carlisle said.

It's a different game now, but it's hard to argue what Carlisle is saying when factoring in the inside-outside game that Wembanyama possesses. There's never been a rookie who averaged so many points and rebounds along with one 3-pointer made per game. Larry Bird was the closest; it's a small sample size, but Wembanyama is making nearly two 3s per contest so far.

AP

San Antonio Spurs center Victor Wembanyama (1) reacts to a play during overtime of the team's NBA basketball game against the Houston Rockets in San Antonio, Friday, Oct. 27, 2023.

The league is raving about the kid who goes by Wemby, and has been from the moment he got drafted—long before that night, really. That hasn't changed, nor has Wembanyama's humble approach.

"Every night is a challenge," Wembanyama said. "I've still got a lot to prove to my teammates and my coach."

His coach might disagree.

Gregg Popovich—the Hall of Famer, the winningest coach in NBA history and someone who just happened to sign a five-year extension shortly after Wembanyama came to the Spurs—makes no effort to downplay his new star's enormous potential.

"The first thing I would say is that his parents did a very good job," Popovich said. "He's one of the most mature 19-year-olds I've ever been around. His character is incredible. His view of the world is mature. He understands who he is, he feels comfortable in his own skin. He knows that all the hype that has been pretty thick, everywhere, is something to be ignored. He realizes he has work to do. Talent is talent, but he's going to channel that and figure out exactly what his game should be."

The lessons have come fast and furious in the first two weeks.

Actually, go back a little. Preseason games are largely forgettable in the NBA, but Wembanyama made the Spurs' exhibitions must-see TV. They were spectacles; Golden State guard Stephen Curry—who is only about a foot shorter than Wembanyama—added to the circus of it all by trying to jump center in the Warriors' exhibition against the Spurs. Shockingly, Wembanyama won that tip, but that night was a reminder of the spotlight that will shine every time San Antonio plays for the foreseeable future.

"The guy's going to be great," said Los Angeles Lakers star LeBron James, who entered the league with great fanfare as the highly touted No. 1 pick in 2003—and watched Wembanyama deal with the same otherworldly expectations 20 years later. "He's already damn good right now and I think every game, every opportunity he's on the floor, he's going to continue to get better and better and see the nuances of the game and ways he can play and ways he can exploit the competition. So, he's going to be great."

If he needed a coming-out party, Wembanyama probably had one last week with a pair of wins in Phoenix.

On Oct. 31, the Spurs rallied from 20 points down to beat the Suns 115-114 after trailing for 47-1/2 of the 48 minutes; two nights later, Wembanyama had 38 points and 10 rebounds and the Spurs beat the Suns again, 132-121.

"He's going to be a force in this league for a long time," Suns forward Kevin Durant said. "Once he continues to get experience under his belt, he's just going to get even better."

There have been rough nights as well. The Spurs lost to the Los Angeles Clippers by 40 last week, then lost to Indiana by 41 on Monday night. They became just the second team in NBA history to have two 40-point losses in the first seven games of the season; the other was the 2017-18 Suns, who went on to be the league's worst team that year.

The Spurs have decidedly higher aspirations and so does Wembanyama. Popovich has never been one for false or effusive praise, but already raves about Wembanyama's coachability, his relationships with teammates, his outlook on life and calls him "a very special young man."

"He just comes to work every day, just like every other player," Popovich said. "You have a system and he's got to learn it. He's got to learn the league. He's never played against any of these guys or with any of these guys on our team. It's just a process. There's no formula. You just try not to skip any steps. Luckily, he's an intelligent, coachable young man and he'll eventually get there. He will be a great player. But he's got some learning to do first, just like any other player."

Mavericks coming through in clutch behind combination of Luka, Kyrie

DENVER (AP)—Luka Doncic has been at his best—one of the NBA's best, too, for that matter—in crunch time this season.

Same with the Dallas Mavericks, who are a league-leading 6-0 in clutch situations, which are defined as a scoring margin within five points and five or fewer minutes left in a game.

It's a small sample size, but the Mavericks look to be taking shape in the first full season of the on-court collaboration between Doncic and Kyrie Irving.

Last season, the Mavericks struggled in clutch time, posting a 6-15 mark after Irving's arrival in the lineup following the trade with Brooklyn. The team ended up missing the postseason.

They just needed a little more time, Mavericks coach Jason Kidd contended, to fine tune their chemistry.

Now, they appear on the same page.

"When you have 77 (Doncic) and 11 (Irving) it's an easy thing," Kidd said of clutch moments. "We talked about last year. As much as we wanted for things to happen right away, you've got to go through the process of growing pains and getting to know one another.

"The other side of that, we've spent a lot of time on in-game situations, and everybody's very comfortable."

Lost in all the Victor Wembanyama mania and the James Harden trade saga has been the play of Doncic, who looks even more dynamic than ever, which is saying quite a bit about the point guard.

Even better, perhaps, than his video game version on "NBA 2K" (very "near," rookie teammate Dereck Lively II cracked).

The 24-year-old Slovenian is doing, well, Luka things.

Doncic is nearly averaging a triple-double. And continuing the "it's never too early to talk about league MVP award" conversation, Doncic's odds, according to FanDuel Sportsook, are just slightly less than that of his buddy and two-time NBA MVP Nikola Jokic of the Denver Nuggets.

"It's always nice to play against him," said Jokic, whose team beat the Mavericks 125-114 last week. "He's a great player. He's unique. He's controlling the game. He's so versatile."

Couple that with Irving and it's led to a hot start for the Mavericks (6-1), who have the second-best mark in the Western Conference. They trail—only slightly—the reigning NBA-champion Nuggets (7-1).

"It's been fun basketball," Irving said. "It's been fun to play."

Doncic checks in at third on a list of seven players who have 20 or more "clutch points" so far this season. He's 8 of 11 for 25 points down the stretch of close games, behind just Stephen Curry (28) and LeBron James (26). Also on the list are Damian Lillard (24), Donovan Mitchell (23), Wembanyama (23), the rookie sensation from France who's taken the league by storm, and Mikal Bridges (20).

"On offense, (Doncic) just always finds the right play," explained Lively, the 7-foot-1 rookie center out of Duke. "And if you don't see the right play, he'll find it himself. No matter if that's him getting the shot, his teammates getting a shot or him throwing a lob, or just being able to find the open man. He does an excellent job of doing that."

Doncic's also sharing the leadership load, with Irving and Grant Williams, the versatile power forward who was acquired from Boston as part of a three-team offseason deal.

That is creating even more freedom for Doncic.

"He impacts the game across the board—his elite scoring, playmaking, rebounding," Nuggets coach Michael Malone said. "It's his team, and he makes everyone around him better. And we know that when he gets that ball, he can make a big, big shot. He loves the moment. He lives for the moment."

Always has. Doncic wasn't sure when that began, because even as a kid no moment seemed too big.

"I just like playing basketball," Doncic said. "And it's always the big moments that are the most important. You're not always going to be on your 'A' game, but it just gets something going in me."

Doncic counts Jokic as one of his good friends. They joke around. They tease one another. And while they rarely talk hoops, they have much admiration for one another on the floor.

"All the players or the coaches know how special he is," Doncic said of Jokic, who won the NBA Finals MVP last season after leading the Nuggets to the franchise's first title. "He's right now probably the best basketball player in the world."

If that's the case, Doncic is right there, too.

"He just destroyed us," Charlotte coach Steve Clifford said after 124-118 loss to the Mavs in a game where Doncic had 23 points, 12 rebounds and nine assists. "They had him for nine assists, but he created almost their entire offense. We couldn't figure out a way to stop him."

A common theme right now. If not Doncic, then it's Irving.

"By having an offseason, having a training camp," Malone said, "those guys are just getting more comfortable."

Ohtani, Rangers' Seager, Semien are AL MVP finalists

» NL trio is Acuña, Betts, Freeman

NEW YORK (AP)—Two-way superstar Shohei Ohtani is a finalist for the AL MVP award, along with teammates Corey Seager and Marcus Semien of the World Series champion Texas Rangers.

Atlanta Braves outfielder Ronald Acuña Jr. headlines the remaining contenders for the National League prize, joined by Los Angeles Dodgers teammates Mookie Betts and Freddie Freeman.

The top three finishers in voting for each of the major individual awards presented annually by the Baseball Writers' Association of America were announced Monday night on MLB Network. All winners will be revealed next week.

New York Yankees ace Gerrit Cole, Toronto Blue Jays pitcher Kevin Gausman and Minnesota Twins right-hander Sonny Gray are finalists for the American League Cy Young Award.

In the National League, it's Zac Gallen of the NL champion Arizona Diamondbacks, Blake Snell of the San Diego Padres and Logan Webb of the San Francisco Giants.

For AL Rookie of the Year, it's down to Cleveland Guardians pitcher Tanner Bibee, Boston Red Sox first baseman Triston Casas and Baltimore Orioles infielder Gunnar Henderson.

The remaining NL Rookie of the Year candidates are Diamondbacks outfielder Corbin Carroll, Dodgers center fielder James Outman and New York Mets pitcher Kodai Senga.

Still up for AL Manager of the Year are first-year Texas manager Bruce Bochy, Tampa Bay's Kevin Cash and Baltimore's Brandon Hyde.

Finalists in the National League include Milwaukee skipper Craig Counsell, who left his hometown team Monday to manage the rival Chicago Cubs, along with Skip Schumaker of the Miami Marlins and Brian Snitker of the Braves.

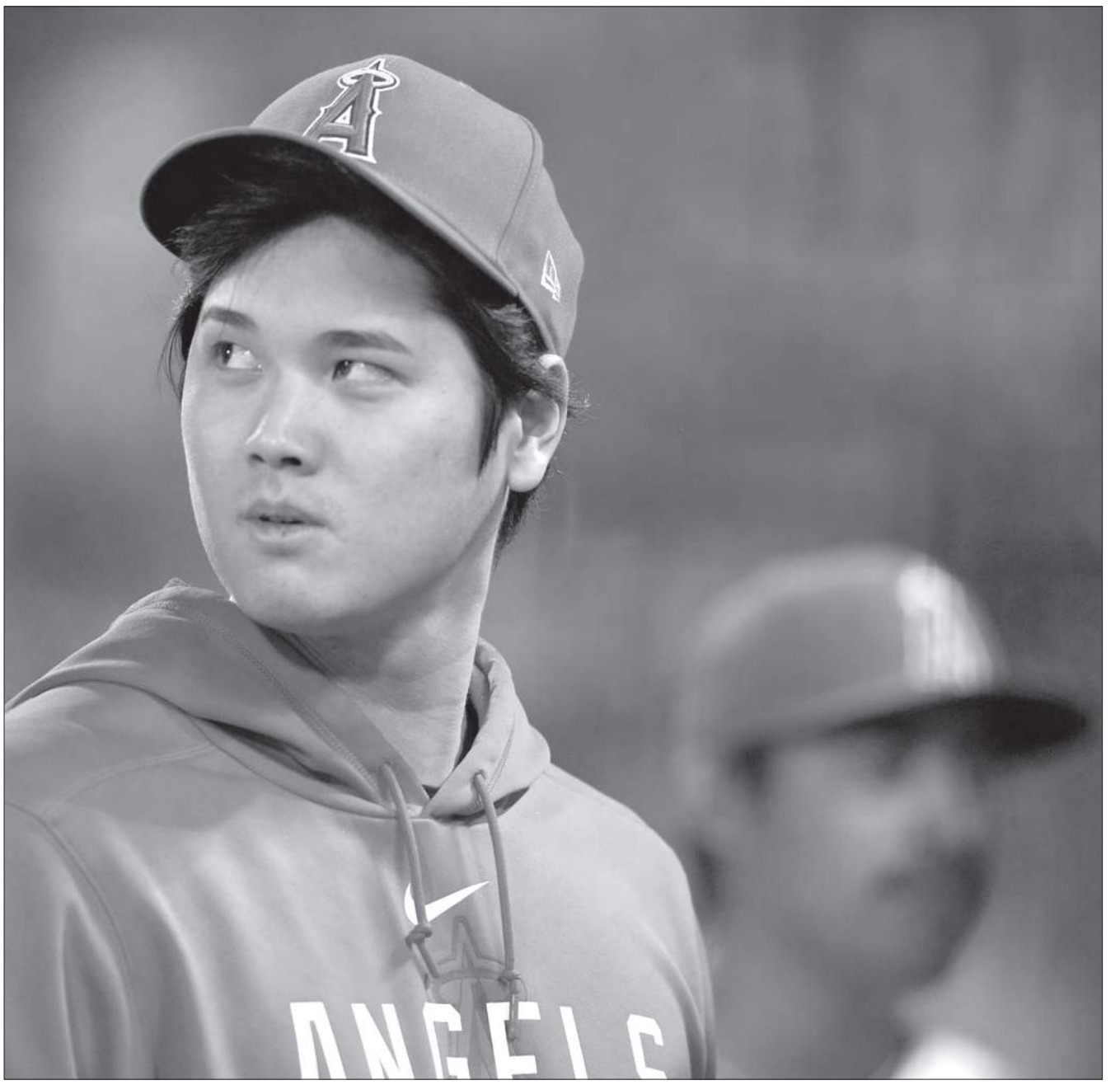
Balloting is conducted before the postseason.

Ohtani, a free agent, is a strong front-runner to win his second AL MVP award in three years even though his season with the Los Angeles Angels ended Sept. 3 because of injuries.

At the plate, he batted .304 with an AL-high 44 homers and 95 RBIs, leading the majors in OPS at 1.066. On the mound, he went 10-5 with a 3.14 ERA and 167 strikeouts in 132 innings over 23 starts.

After undergoing surgery in September on his right elbow, Ohtani is not expected to pitch next season. But his surgeon has said Ohtani should be able to hit in 2024 before returning to the mound in 2025. His agent, Nez Balelo, has said Ohtani is determined to continue his two-way career after recovering from surgery.

Last year, Ohtani finished second to Yankees slugger Aaron Judge in AL MVP voting and fourth in Cy Young Award balloting.



AP

Los Angeles Angels' Shohei Ohtani walks in the dugout during the ninth inning of the team's baseball game against the Detroit Tigers in Anaheim, Calif., Sept. 16, 2023.

World Series 9-inning games averaged 3 hours, 1 minute—fastest since 1996

NEW YORK (AP)—If you think the World Series sped by, it did.

Nine-inning games averaged 3 hours, 1 minute, the fastest since 1996, according to the Elias Sports Bureau. The first postseason of the pitch clock also included defensive shift limits and larger bases, leading to increased stolen bases and appearing to contribute to higher batting averages.

"From what I've heard of people that pay attention to our games, it's really more interactive and the pitch clock is good for baseball," said first baseman Nathaniel Lowe of World Series champion Texas.

Postseason nine-inning games overall averaged 3:02, down from 3:23 last year and 3:37 in 2021, the last season before the PitchCom electronic pitch-calling device. That mirrored a regular season with an average game time of 2:40, the lowest since 1985.

Just one postseason game topped 4 hours, when the Rangers beat Arizona in an 11-inning World Series opener. Six of 40 postseason games exceeded 4 hours in 2022.

Three World Series games ended in under 3 hours, including the first consecutive games since 2006.

The faster pace didn't help ratings, though. The Texas-Arizona showdown averaged 9.11 million viewers, making it the least-watched Fall Classic in TV history.

MLB set the pitch clock at 15 seconds with the bases empty and 20 seconds with runners on base. Just seven pitch clock violations were assessed in the postseason, an average of one per six games. There were none during the World Series.

Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred resisted calls from some players to extend the clock in the postseason.

"I think we made the right call," Manfred said. "The concept, and it was really owners more than anybody else, of playing the way we played all year is a really important one. And I'm glad it doesn't seem to have had a impact on the outcome of any game."

Runs per game increased to 8.2 from 7.3 and batting average to .241 from .211 in the postseason sample of 41 games. Batting average for left-handed hitters climbed to .238 from .211. The stolen base jump was more marked with each base 18-by-18-inches instead of 15-by-15. Steals per game rose to 1.4 from 0.9 and attempts to 1.6 from 1.1. The success rate increased to 85.1% from 77.3%.

"The pitch clock took the pitchers and I think a lot of guys time to adjust to over the course of the season, and especially in playoff games," Philadelphia pitcher Aaron Nola said. "Obviously everything is a little bit more heightened and the stakes are a little bit higher than the regular season."

Postseason strikeouts dropped to 23.8% of plate appearances from 27%, and walks increased to 9% from 7.6%.

Manfred said no major rules changes are planned for 2024. He wants to give at least another year before considering more innovations.

"I love the pace of the game right now," Rangers manager Bruce Bochy said. "I don't think it's gone too fast."

MLB Briefs

Yoshinobu Yamamoto headed to MLB after his Orix club agrees to transfer

TOKYO (AP)—Yoshinobu Yamamoto will be allowed to move to a Major League Baseball team under the player posting system, the Orix Buffaloes said Sunday after it lost Game 7 of the Japan Series to the Hanshin Tigers. The ace pitcher has been widely reported ready to move to MLB and is expected to be a top target.

"I'd like to thank my team for accepting my request," Yamamoto was quoted by Japan's Kyodo news agency as saying after Orix lost 7-1 in the Games 7 on Sunday. Yamamoto pitched two games during the Japan Series—the World Series equivalent for Japanese baseball. He allowed seven earned runs in Game 1 but came back in Game 6 and struck out 14—a series record. The 25-year-old right-handed pitcher has a 70-29 record in Japanese baseball. His trademark is his wide assortment of breaking pitches, excellent command, and a fastball in the mid-90 mph range. He was 16-6 this season with a 1.21 ERA. He struck out 169 in 164 innings.

Germán cut by Yanks 5 months after perfect game, 3 months after starting alcohol treatment

NEW YORK (AP)—Domingo Germán became a free agent Monday when he refused an outright assignment to the minor leagues from the New York Yankees, five months after he pitched Major League Baseball's 24th perfect game and three months after he entered alcohol abuse treatment. Germán pitched the perfect game at Oakland on June 28, part of a season in which he went 5-7 with a 4.56 ERA in 19 starts and one relief appearance. His season ended Aug. 2, when he was placed on the restricted list two days before his 31st birthday. The Yankees said they made the move as he was entering treatment. Germán is 31-28 with a 4.41 ERA in 89 starts and 23 relief appearances over six seasons. He would have been eligible for salary arbitration had he remained on the roster. He served a 10-game suspension in May after getting ejected from a game at Toronto for using a banned sticky substance on the mound. He also was suspended 81 games by Major League Baseball in 2019 and 2020 for violating the sport's domestic violence policy. Right-handers Matt Bowman, Jimmy Cordero and Ryan Weber also refused outright assignments and became free agents along with infielder/outfielder Franchy Cordero and outfielder Billy McKinney. All would have been eligible for arbitration had they stayed on the roster. New York selected the contract of catcher Carlos Narvaez from Triple-A Scranton/Wilkes-Barre,

By MARK RABAGO
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EDITOR

Fajardo wins SGA October Ace

Mariano Fajardo topped the Saipan Golf Association 2023 October Ace of the Month Tournament played last Oct. 15 at the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort east course.

Fajaro shot a net 72 to win the monthly tee-off. He came away with a gross of 95 after a front nine of 45 and back nine of 50.

He actually finished tied for third place with September Ace winner Attorney General Edward Manibusan (gross 80, 39-41), but took the monthly plum because the latter already won.

In fact, the Top 2 of the SGA October Ace were also deemed ineligible to win as Larry Deleon Guerrero (68 net), Tony S. Reyes (net 71) already won previously.

In the closest to the pin, Joe I. Sablan was without peer in holes No, 4 and 5, while Tony DeLeon Guerrero was the winner in hole No. 15.

In the longest drive, Das Krishnan brought the lumber in hole No. 3, while Rick Kautz did the same in hole No. 16.

In the September Ace held last Sept. 24 at the Kagman golf course, Manibusan took the plum with a net of 72. Tony Reyes and Deleon Guerrero shot better than the former presiding judge of the Superior Court with post-handicap scores of 66 and 70, respectively. However, they were again deemed ineligible as they've already won.

Fajardo

In the closet to the pin for September, Manibusan ruled hole No. 13, while Fajardo topped hole No. 17. Longest drive winners were Fajardo on hole No. 2 and Reyes on hole No. 18.

Mariano and Manibusan now join SGA 2023 Ace of Aces Tournament qualifiers Ray S. Salas (January), Das Krishnan (February), Joe I. Sablan (March), Rick Kautz (April), Nick C. Sablan (May), Tony S. Reyes (June), Larry I. Deleon Guerrero (July), and Edward C. Sablan (August).

The SGA 2023 November Ace of the Month Tournament is scheduled this Sunday, Nov. 12, at the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort east course. Tee time is 9am with a show time of 8:30am.

Meanwhile, Dec. 10 is the proposed date for the December Ace of the Month Tournament and Dec. 17 for the season-ending Ace of Aces Tournament.

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

Airport 8K, Veterans Day 5K this Saturday

Run Saipan's 2nd Annual Saipan International Airport 8K Trail Race '23 & 5K Veteran's Day Run is set for this Saturday at 6am at the Continental Road near the United Cargo.

Enjoy the scenic view of runway 06/07 and runway 24/25 from the perimeter line and view aircrafts landing and taking off.

Run Saipan president Edward Dela Cruz Jr. said there's no difference for this year's course. "It serves as the adult cross country championship for the year partnered with the Commonwealth Ports Authority and the Northern Marianas Athletics."

He added, "The 5K is redubbed the Veterans Day 5k since it falls on the holiday and we would like to honor our veterans and for those who do not wish to run the full 8K."

Dela Cruz said for those who will run the 8K, they are awarding the Top 3 in the age divisions below: open and master's age divisions from 35-49, 40-44, 45-49, 50-54, 55-59, and 60+.

For the 5K race, only the Top 3 male and female will be awarded medals.

There are no prizes this year as they only had them in the inaugural race last year.

There is also no student age group this year. "We had the PSS All Schools Cross Country for them. This is the big leagues for the adults to be honored and recognized, said Dela Cruz.

Dela Cruz then thanked CPA "for continuing this iconic race around our beautiful airport and to NMA for partnering another year of our adult cross country championship."

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Anastasia Dela Cruz finished first place in the women's division of the Inaugural Saipan International Airport 8K Trail Race and 5K last year.

To sign up, click the link below: https://raceroster.com/events/2023/70412/saipan-international-airport-8k-trail-race-23-and-5k-veterans-day-run

Last year's 5K accidental winners were Jericho Tobias at 51:21 and Anastasia Dela Cruz—along with baby Sasha in a stroller—with a time of 53:44, as the top runners made mistakes on the turnaround.

For the 8K portion, Paul Timm came in first overall with a time of 36:39 and Denise Myers was first in the women's division with a time of 37:23.

Veteran QB Wentz signing with LA Rams, source says

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The Los Angeles Rams are signing quarterback Carson Wentz, a person with knowledge of the deal tells The Associated Press.

The source spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity Tuesday because Wentz needed to pass a physical before the deal could be announced. Los Angeles is on its bye week.

Wentz has been out of the NFL this season after starting seven games last year for the Washington Commanders. The seven-year NFL veteran was Philadelphia's starter for five years, and he started all 17 games for Indianapolis in 2021.

The Rams (3-6) are in need of another passer behind Matthew Stafford, who missed Los Angeles' dismal loss at rainy Green Bay last weekend with a sprained thumb ligament. The Rams are on a three-game losing streak, falling to 8-18 since winning the Super Bowl.

Backup Brett Rypien was the only other quarterback on the Rams' roster before Stafford's injury, and he struggled to a 13-of-28 performance with two fumbles and an interception in Los Angeles' 20-3 loss.

The Rams waived Rypien on Tuesday, a necessary move if the team intends to put him back on its practice squad.

Rams coach Sean McVay said Monday he is optimistic about Stafford playing in their next game against Seattle on Nov. 19, but the signing of Wentz indicates the Rams want insurance in case the injury lingers or Stafford gets hurt again.

Los Angeles attempted to make it through the season with Stafford and Rypien as the only quarterbacks on their roster. The Rams drafted Stetson Bennett in the fourth round last spring, but the two-time national champion at Georgia has been away from the team since the preseason for undisclosed reasons.

Stafford missed the second half of last season with a bruised spinal cord, and the Rams struggled with backups John Wolford and Bryce Perkins. Los Angeles then acquired Baker Mayfield, who led the Rams to a win over Las Vegas two days after signing and eventually resuscitated his career enough to earn a new contract as Tampa Bay's starter this season.

Rams general manager Les Snead chose Jared Goff over Wentz as the No. 1 overall pick in the 2016 draft after extensively evaluating both quarterbacks. Goff led the Rams to a Super Bowl appearance, and he was later traded to Detroit in the package for Stafford, who won the Super Bowl in his first season with Los Angeles.

Wentz has passed for 22,129 yards and 151 touchdowns in his NFL career. He was in the midst of a standout season for the Eagles in 2017 until he incurred a season-ending knee injury during a game against the Rams, and Nick Foles went on to lead Philadelphia to a Super Bowl title.

LEINA

From page 20

the women played from the red tees so the yardage we were playing was shorter than what I am used to. Thankfully, I was able to really concentrate more on my short game which I believe is the most important part of anyone's golf game. I recently got new irons, wedges, and a putter and I was able to focus more on them and gain more confidence with my putter which really helped me throughout my game this weekend."

Kim-Cox warmed up for the Bayonet at Puppy Creek Club Championship by playing in two other golf tournaments.

"This summer, I played in, what I believe, two big golf events since college. I qualified in the USGA Women's Mid-Amateur Championship and this club championship. Unfortunately, I was not able to make it to the USGA event in Pennsylvania due to having to play for two. So, this tournament that I was able to participate in goes to my future baby girl for being a good luck charm."

The expectant mother thanked her husband, James, for supporting her golf hobby.

"I don't play as often as I did during my college days, but my husband tries to get me out at least every other weekend or weekday to keep my momentum going."

Kim-Cox said she visiting Saipan this week with her husband couldn't come sooner.

"I miss the calm beaches, the year-round warm weather, and most definitely the food. I also miss the tight-knit community and being around family."

KANOA

From page 20

MP United FC, 4-0.

Shirley's Jeraldine Castillo went 2-for-2 with back-to-back goals in the 14th and 15th minute for an early 2-0 lead. A tug of war of possession on the pitch ensued, with Shirley's coming out victorious as Jannah Casarino scored two more of their goals by the 37th minute.

MP United then conceded as they failed to get on the board before time ran out.

Intermediate

In the Flores-Pee Luwal (Intermediate Division) last Sunday, Paire FC 1 drubbed Shirley's, 5-0. Paire 2 won their game as well via a shutout, 4-0 final against Kanoa.

MP United FC 2 then defeated sister team 1, 2-1, and Matansa FC slipped past Latte, 1-0.

Novice

In the Novice Division last Friday, Paire continued to rack up wins as they beat Shirley's, 3-1; Kanoa and Latte ended in a 1-1 draw; and Matansa silenced MP United 2, 2-0.

OFFICE

From page 20

the lead. It would've been a tough loss for Office of the Governor after a huge lead throughout the game, but Jack Aranda ensured to take it back from the 3-point line.

A huge 3-pointer by Aranda with 45 seconds left put them up, 73-71. It wasn't enough though as CPA was gunning for more and tied it up with an uncontested layup by Zack Diaz after a steal.

Aranda tried to seal the deal once and for all with one more attempt from the outside, but missed—and into the waiting arms of teammate Juan Camacho who made it 77-73 with the rebound.

With less than 20 seconds left, CPA's multiple Hail Mary shots by Brennan went unanswered and the buzzer sounded with Office of the Governor hanging on to the win.

Aranda ended up with 19 points, Vince Igitol had 16 markers, and Camacho scored 14. Brennan went away with 21, Mancao had 15, and David Camacho contributed 12.

In the game right after, PSS defeated Priority Care, 84-76.

The double-elimination playoff schedule is as follows: MarPac vs. Office of the Governor at 5:30pm and Joeten vs. PSS at 7pm tonight.

On Saturday, 4:30pm, Priority Care takes on the loser of Thursday's 5:30pm game and CPA takes on the loser of Thursday's 7pm game.

Office of the Governor 77 – Aranda 19, Igitol 16, Camacho 14, Galarse 9, Pangelinan 7, Flores 6, Taisague 6.

CPA 73 – Brennan 21, Mancao 15, Camacho 12, Robert 10, Diaz 6, Cepeda 5, Tomokane 2, Ogo 2.

Scoring by quarters: 20-11, 34-30, 64-48, 77-73.

Victor Wembanyama's NBA education is underway.

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Sports

Fajardo wins SGA October Ace.

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Leina makes triumphant golf return

By MARK RABAGO
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EDITOR

Former Colorado State University-Pueblo golf varsity player Leina Kim-Cox still has it after the many-time local golf champion topped the ladies flight of the recent Bayonet at Puppy Creek Club Championship in Raeford, North Carolina.

The 31-year-old alumnae of Marianas Baptist Academy shot a two-round total of 9-under 135 to win her division. Kim-Cox shot a 5-under 67 on Day 1 before capping it off with a 4-under 68 on Day 2.

In all, the product of the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort's junior golf program had an eagle, 12 birdies, and 19 pars to more than offset her three bogeys in the Oct. 28-29 tourney.

"My best hole was hole No. 18 on the first day. It is a par-5 hole where I shot my driver and was left with a 113-yard shot. With the wind blowing behind me, I decided to hit my 9 iron and left it about 10 feet from the hole and I ended up making that put for an eagle. It was a great way to end the round."

Conversely, Kim-Cox said her worst hole during the tournament was hole No. 17 on Day 2.

"I shot my driver and was left with about a 30-yard chip on a pretty difficult slope. Unfortunately, I bladed my chip across the green, tried to do a flop shot, but ended up short on the green and three-putted for a double bogey."

She attributed her win in the ladies flight to happenstance as the tee shot at the Bayonet at Puppy Creek Club Championship turned out to be shorter than what she's used to.

"During the club championship,

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Leina Kim-Cox shows off her ladies flight championship trophy and her score in the recent Bayonet at Puppy Creek Club Championship in Raeford, North Carolina.

Kanoa, Shirley's notch wins in Premier soccer

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

Kanoa Football Club and Shirley's FC notched wins in Week 4 of the Tinekcha-Awaal (Premier Division) Fall 2023 Dove Women's League last Wednesday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

Kanoa didn't give the up-and-coming NMI U17 team a chance as they won, 7-1. Vianca Mangulabnan and Kaithyln Chavez quickly gave Kanoa a 2-0 advantage in the 22nd minute, but U17's Kaye Anne Costales managed to snag a goal just a minute later.

The U17 team then could not locate the net as that was the only goal they would make the whole game. Irish Pagarao gave Kanoa one more goal before the second half to make it 3-1.

Kanoa went on to pound the net as Mia Abuan scored two goals by the 45th minute, then one was made by Christina Atalig, and one more went in by Pagarao in the 65th minute.

On Friday, Shirley's blanked

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Kanoa FC's Deseha Mendiola, left, sets up the play during one of their games in the Tinekcha Awaal (Premier Division) Fall 2023 Dove Women's League at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

Office of the Governor outlasts CPA in playoffs, 77-73

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

The playoffs are now underway for the Inaugural R&J Wine and Liquor Inter-Gov't/Business League 2023.

The Office of the Governor drew first blood as they came out unscathed from a tough game against CPA, 77-73, Tuesday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Heading into the last quarter, Office of the Governor had a 16-point, 64-48 lead, but blew it in the final minutes. It seemed like it would be a walk in the park for them, but CPA had other plans and doubled-time their plays.

With less than three minutes left in the game, the double-digit Office of the Governor lead whittled down to just 7 points. CPA took advantage of the blown lead and Office of the Governor's exhausted players to gain control, 72-71, at the 1:30 mark from fastbreak plays by Michael Mancao and Donovan Brennan.

LEIGH GASES
Office of the Governor's Vince Igitol lets one fly as he's contested by CPA's Zack Diaz during their double-elimination playoff game of the Inaugural R&J Wine and Liquor Inter-Gov't/Business League 2023 at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

It was all or nothing for both teams as they laid it all on the line with a tug-of-war fight for possession and

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